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DISCOURSE

ON THE

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH,

SALEM.

A

HISTORICAL DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED ON THE

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

FORMATION

OF THE

First Baptist Church, Salem, Mass.,

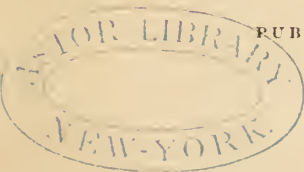
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BY

ROBERT C. MILLS,

Pastor of the Church.

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DISCOURSE.

THE LORD OUR GOD BE WITH US AS HE WAS WITH OUR
FATHERS: LET HIM NOT LEAVE US NOR FORSAKE US.

1 KINGS viii. 57. -

THESE words constitute a part of the benediction with which king Solomon blessed the whole congregation of Israel, after the prayer in which he had dedicated his temple to the service of Jehovah. They are not only fit words for this church and society to utter to-day, but I am confident that they correctly express their feelings in regard to the favor which God manifested to their fathers. In them is embodied all that they desire for themselves and their successors. Even in the external affairs of the society, no more can be wished for than the continuance of past prosperity. But preëminently is this the case in spiritual affairs. The present members of this church speak of, and strive after, the humility, faith, love and devotion of its founders. May this review increase these desires to more intensity, and awaken a spirit of prayer that the second half century of its history may resemble in spiritual blessings the first, which terminated yesterday.

It is proper that this church should desire, by a review of the past, to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of its

formation. In connection with this, the peculiar circumstances will justify a representation of the political and religious affairs amidst which our fathers lived when this church was organized. And it seems likewise proper, that the history of Baptist sentiments in connection with this town prior to this century, should not be overlooked on the present occasion. On these grounds, I hope that although the narration of facts preliminary to the actual history of this church is somewhat extended, it may not seem uncalled for and unfit.

Let us then, in the first place, endeavor to recall the memorable scenes of the beginning of this century. We think our own are eventful years. Those to which we now refer were fully as much so, in comparison with the years that had preceded them. Then, also, as now, "men's hearts failed them for fear, and for looking after those things which were coming on the earth." Then, likewise, many were laboring to discover where in the rolls of inspired prophecy their times were placed. But then, as well as now, all calculations and anticipations were at fault, and none knew the end of the events then transpiring, nor knew the things that should succeed them, until God brought them to pass. Besides this, the state of public affairs fifty years ago bore such a resemblance to that of the present time, as no period in the interval has furnished.

As the monarch in the eastern part of Europe whose territory his foes have now invaded, has not one open ally in his fellow sovereigns, so stood another, equally alone, on the Atlantic shore of that continent, at the time to which we now refer. The peace of Amiens had been terminated by England in March 1803, and matters were, in 1804, hastening towards that combination of all the

monarchs of Europe against Napoleon, in which his transcendent military genius, and the almost boundless resources of France, were exhibited to the world beyond all previous example. In the same year, while the blacks had just completed the expulsion of their French masters from Hayti, Napoleon was filling all England with the fear of an invasion, and at home preparing to assume the imperial title and crown, as had just been done by the Grand Duke of Lorraine, then holding the throne of Austria, and thus making it imperial. England was gathering all her resources to repel the expected invasion, and employing her skill to secure that coalition of all the European powers against him who thus threatened her coasts, and who had aided her efforts by the exasperation to which the foul murder of the Duke D'Enghien, March 21, 1804, had excited all his opponents. Napoleon was crowned Emperor, Dec. 2, 1804. At the same time, Arthur Wellesley, afterwards Lord Wellington, was subduing the Mahrattas in India; and exhibiting those rare powers for civil government, combined with capacity in the field, in which he alone of modern men is worthy of comparison with his mighty antagonist at Waterloo. The great British historian of Europe since 1789, says, that the plans of Napoleon for invading England "nearly proved successful in the following year, and placed the English monarchy in greater jeopardy than it had stood since the battle of Hastings." At the same time he also matured the details of that astonishing march of his land forces into the heart of Germany, from which soon resulted the victories of Ulm and Austerlitz. With the latter of these he signalized the first anniversary of his coronation, Dec. 2, 1805; and by it, in the judgment of Sir Walter Scott, so depressed Pitt, the great Prime

Minister of England, as to hasten his death. Only six weeks before this victory, Oct. 21, England had gained the greatest triumph in her naval history, by vanquishing the combined fleets of France and Spain at Trafalgar, but at the cost of Nelson's life, whose rank among her admirals is the same as Pitt's among her ministers.

Our own country, then first taking a prominent rank as a commercial power, saw thrown into the hands of its merchants and seamen, the bulk of the carrying trade of the seas. And just at this juncture it was passing through a crisis at home. The first of our frequent and sublime transfers of the supreme power to a new political party had recently taken place; and Jefferson had nearly closed his term of service as President, without having yet been reëlected to the same high post. Louisiana had recently been purchased under his direction, by abandoning those views of the strict confinement of the Federal government to the actual specifications of the Constitution, of which he had been a prominent champion, as his party had asserted it as one of their peculiar principles. Thus, in 1803, came that first enlargement of our national domain beyond the bounds possessed and claimed by the original States, the results of which have been two of the severest trials of the strength of our government, one in 1820, and the other in the year now closing.

Not six months before the formation of this church, July 11, 1804, the nation, with a thrill of horror, learned that Hamilton had been killed in a duel by Aaron Burr. This event produced the greatest excitement; one has even said, that "the intelligence of his fall paralyzed the country."* Even the bitterest party hostility was

* Sabine, Notes on Duels and Duelling, p. 210.

quelled for a time ; and not Hamilton's friends alone considered his loss to the country second only to that of Washington. But this was not all. Burr was then our Vice President, and, even to the surprise of his own party, had missed the higher seat of President by wanting but a single electoral vote. The hearts of the good sank within them at the character developed by so prominent a statesman. But their fears were quelled, as they now saw him fall, "like Lucifer, never to hope again."

Such were the prominent points of public concern fifty years ago. In the Christian world, other affairs of equal interest, and greater moment, were at this time claiming attention. The Baptist Mission in India had been prosecuted about ten years, and had seen entering into a participation of its toils for the heathen, first the London, and then the Church Missionary Societies. At exactly the time when this church was formed, Henry Martyn was leaving college to embark for those labors which, although closed with his life in less than eight years, have excited the love and emulation of all Christian hearts. In the same year, 1804, the British and Foreign Bible Society was founded, which yet holds the same place in rank as in age. The first suggestion of the formation of such a society came from Joseph Hughes, the Baptist minister of Battersea, who afterwards was known, far and wide, as its first secretary. Nor was this his only memorable employment at this period. As 1804 closed, and 1805 opened, he was reading and discussing with John Foster, the celebrated Essays of the latter, which then were passing through the press. While these were thus busied, others of their brethren were, with the promise of Foster's aid, ushering into life the Eclectic Review, which was designed to supply the defects, and to counter-

act the impieties of the two great journals lately established at Edinburgh and London. It still flourishes, although, as we gratefully testify, the great occasion of its establishment has long ceased to characterize its eminent compeers. Robert Hall, just after writing to Olinthus Gregory to enlist his aid in the new Review, had an attack of illness, which, as 1805 commenced, dethroned his reason. From this he happily recovered, before that year had half elapsed. Abraham Booth had just died. Andrew Fuller, near the close of his fifty-first year, was in the full strength of manhood. Besides his pastoral charge at Kettering, the Missionary Society and the press participated in his labors at this date. For the Missionary Society he made a collecting visit to Ireland, and, on his return, revealed the lamentably low state of piety, the unscriptural views, and the remiss discipline of some Baptist churches of that island. Immediately after, he took in hand the preparation for the press of his two volumes of Expository Discourses on Genesis. Ryland, and Fawcett, and Sutcliffe, and Newman, and Steadman, were the living friends and fellow laborers of these servants of Christ. Less generally known, and not distinguished by an equally extensive influence in our denomination and the world, yet, with the others, these men contended successfully in delivering English Baptists from the blight of Antinomianism; and furnished what still may claim to be the golden age of the English history of our denomination.

When we endeavor to recall the state of our own denomination, and others near us at home, fifty years ago, we can more easily present names that will be recognized, than a sketch of society that will be remembered. Those who adhered to our theological views were then few

in numbers, and feeble in resources. Yet we were by no means as diminutive as is often supposed. In 1790, we had one hundred and seven churches in this State, composed of seven thousand one hundred and sixteen members, while in 1755, thirty-five years before, there were but seven; and in 1807, seventeen years after, there were one hundred and ninety-four churches. In our immediate neighborhood, there were two churches in Boston, one in Haverhill, one in Chelmsford, one in Georgetown, one in Danvers, one in Beverly, and one in Reading. The leading ministers in this region were Stillman and Baldwin of Boston, Smith of Haverhill, Chaplin of Danvers, Nelson of Reading, Grafton of Newton, and Williams of Beverly. In other parts of our country, our most eminent ministers were Gano of Providence, Backus of Middleboro', now quite advanced in life, Messer, President of Brown University, Samuel and David Jones, and William Rogers of the Philadelphia Association. Staughton, afterwards very eminent, had just removed to Philadelphia, the scene of his greatest usefulness, and highest reputation and influence. Further south, Richard Furman in South Carolina, and Jesse Mercer in Georgia, were now actively laboring in the service of Christ, as they were long permitted to do, with distinguished usefulness, and a reputation both eminent and well deserved.

The state of piety in the American churches was low; and the tone of feeling towards scriptural Christianity in the country generally, was far from favorable. Jefferson bitterly detested the clergy of New England.* With his accession to the Presidency, there was, therefore, in some

* Hildreth, History of the United States, vol. v. p. 458.

quarters an assumed triumph of more liberal views than Christianity permits ; and in others, painful fears that it was but too justly claimed. The poisonous influence of intercourse and alliance with France, manifested itself in a somewhat extended acceptance of the infidel sentiments which, for nearly a century, have made that country, more generally than justly, a by-word among the religious. The biographer of President Dwight informs us, that about the close of the eighteenth century, when Dwight became President of Yale College, infidelity was extensively prevalent in the State of Connecticut, in the country, and even in the college.* He therefore judged it his duty to discuss the foundations of Christianity with his classes ; and he delivered a series of lectures on its evidences, in connection with those sermons which have so long been known, and so highly esteemed as his system of theology. In New York, similar views prevailed to a sad extent among educated men. About 1820, a grateful change had, however, become so perceptible as to attract attention. Somewhere about this time, it was the subject of discussion at the house of Governor Clinton. One who was present records, that “the inquiry was started by Gov. C. how we are to account for the great change which has taken place in the last twenty years in the minds of the educated classes, and especially among public men. ‘What are the main causes,’ he asked, ‘which have produced or brought it about?’ ‘As to the fact,’ said Chancellor Kent, ‘there is no doubt—there can be no doubt. I remember,’ he added, ‘that in my younger days there were very few professional men that were not infidels, or at least so far inclined to infidelity,

* Page 22 of Life, by S. E. Dwight.

that they could not be called believers in the truth of the Bible.' ”

In this State, while infidelity was not openly avowed as frequently as in some other parts of the Union, the gradual departure of the ministry and people from the religious views of their fathers, had become very extensive and quite thorough.* The late Dr. A. Alexander visited New England in 1801, and of the Boston ministers he gave this account, from information thus gained : “ Dr. Kirkland was said to be a Socinian, as was Mr. Popham ; and Dr. Howard, an Arian. Dr. Eckley had professed to be an Edwardean, but he came out, after my visit, a high Arian. Mr. Eliot was an Arian, Mr. Emerson a Unitarian of some sort, and Dr. Lathrop a Universalist. Dr. Freeman, one of the first who departed from orthodoxy, was the lowest of all, a mere humanitarian. He still used the book of Common Prayer, altered so as to suit his opinions. Dr. Morse was considered a rigid Trinitarian. Dr. Harris, of Dorchester, was reckoned a low Arminian, and became a thorough Unitarian † . ” These names include the principal Congregational ministers of Boston and its suburbs. Such had been the state of matters for some time, since from the representations of an English minister who held Unitarian sentiments, and spoke from personal observation, the *Monthly Repository* of London said, vol. 3, p. 302, “ There is every reason to expect that in thirty or forty years more, the whole of Massachusetts will be Unitarian. ” Rev. Dr. Alexander also informs us, that “ Harvard College was not yet under Unitarian control, but was leaning in that direction, ‡ ”

* See note A, at the end of the Discourse.

† Memoir, p. 252.

‡ Memoir, p. 263.

although Willard, Tappan and Pearson, its prominent officers, were of orthodox sentiments, and Parkman declared in the letter cited in Note A, that if Kirkland, who succeeded Willard's successor in 1810, "had been an acknowledged defender of Unitarianism, he would not have been elected to that place."

At the commencement of this century, revivals of religion of a marked character were enjoyed in the Congregational churches of the extreme western part of this State, and the contiguous north-western portion of Connecticut. The ministers whose congregations were thus blessed, were Timothy Cooley, Samuel Shepard, Jeremiah Hallock, Edward D. Griffin, and Ebenezer Porter. Not so favored was this portion of the State, filled as too many pulpits were, with men who held other views than these did of the Gospel and the way of life. Yet this section was not destitute of Congregational ministers who were assertors and defenders of the truth as the fathers had held it. Morse, of Charlestown, Worcester, of this city, Spring and Dana, of Newburyport, and Woods, of Newbury, are well known, and rendered faithful service. But in Boston they had not a single fellow-laborer, decidedly maintaining the views of their fathers in the pulpits of those fathers. Their views of gospel-truth, excepting in reference to the ordinances were, however, ably and successfully sustained by two men memorable in our annals, and not in ours alone. The history of the preaching of the Gospel in Boston, will assign to Samuel Stillman and Thomas Baldwin, the honor which the historian of the Old South Church of that city has given them, of standing alone, to assert, boldly and distinctly, orthodox sentiments amid their general abandonment, and virtually

preserving the truth from extinction by the defection of its supposed and professed friends.

Park Street Church was organized February 28, 1809. "Previous to the formation of that church, orthodoxy had nearly died out in this metropolis. * * * All the Congregational churches, except the Old South, had gone over to Unitarianism, and even that church wavered and poised upon the very verge of the precipice. Arminianism, or disguised Unitarianism, was triumphant, and Orthodoxy was most unpopular. It was nearly as much as a man's character was worth to avow himself a believer in the doctrines of the Fathers of New England." When it was formed, only three pastors of the neighborhood were willing to meet in the council for its organization. The Old South Church was invited, but declined the invitation. Amid this sad change, of the Baptist churches in the State (about one hundred and twenty-five), not a single one went over to heresy. "Stillman and Baldwin fearlessly preached the truth, and did not a little to restore animation to the dying energies of orthodox Congregationalism.*" It was, says Wisner, of the Old South Church, "from the Baptist meetings, that a reviving influence was brought into this congregation, which had for a time," about 1803, "to struggle for existence;" since "all the religious interests of this society were visibly and rapidly declining." †

It is instructive to see how distinctly Mr. Wisner has, in the work thus quoted, traced the decay of orthodoxy, and the introduction of unscriptural doctrines and practices, to views resulting from infant-baptism, and conse-

* Christian Times, March 9, 1850.

† History of Old South Church, p. 46.

quent "lax practice in reference to the communion;" and on the other hand, has attributed the maintenance of the truth, and the revival of scriptural piety to Baptists, who held opposite and more correct views of the ordinances of the Gospel.*

Infant baptism led to Arminianism, and that to Socinianism in churches which had been strictly Calvinistic; and thus here, as elsewhere, was there furnished a confirmation of what Dr. Arnold has testified, that "the great cause of hindrance to the triumph of Christianity is in the corruption, not of the religion of Christ, but of the church of Christ."

Shortly previous, however, to the formation of our church, Divine favor was manifested to the two Baptist ministers above mentioned, and their flocks in a very peculiar manner. Early in 1803, while the first pastor of this church was prosecuting theological study with Rev. Dr. Stillman, an unusual seriousness appeared in his church, and that of his fellow-laborer, Rev. Thomas Baldwin. It first manifested itself in the increased solemnity of the services on Lord's day, and continued with extensive and most happy results through nearly three years. An account of it is preserved in the first volume of the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine, from which we learn, that the number added by baptism to the First Church at this time, was one hundred and twenty-seven, and to the Second, two hundred and twelve. But the results of this blessing were not confined to these churches, nor even our own denomination. "Persons from almost every society in Boston, and numbers from adjacent towns," the account says, attended the meet-

* History of Old South Church, pp. 39-46.

ings, and gave “reason to believe that many of them reaped saving advantages.*” From amid such scenes of Divine blessing, Rev. Lucius Bolles came to this city, to begin those labors which resulted in the speedy formation of this church. It is natural to suppose that the peculiar and continued religious interest among the Baptists in Boston and vicinity, should have incited those resident here to make an effort to serve God more effectually than they yet had done. That it did, seems a fair inference from Dr. Stillman’s remark, in his address to them in his ordination sermon, that they would now no more need to attend a church at Boston, where some of them had been members.

We must now turn back to the early history of Baptists in connection with this city.†

There is no place in New England more memorable than Salem in the history of our denomination. It is so on account of traces of our sentiments found here prior to the formation of any Baptist church either at Providence, Newport, or Rehoboth (afterwards Swansea), which seem to prove that they were brought here by those who had learned them in England. Two brothers named Browne, who came here with the first settlers, set up the Episcopal service. They were called before the Governor for doing so. In their defence they charged the ministers, for departing from the usages of the Church of England, with being “Separatists,” and said they would soon become Anabaptists.‡ This was at the time a common charge against those whose scruples in regard to the

* Mass. Baptist Missionary Magazine, vol. i. pp. 91. 129.

† Salem is here, and elsewhere, spoken of by its present title, although it was not constituted a city until 1836.

‡ Neal. Hist. of New England, vol. i. p. 144.

Book of Common Prayer led them to leave the Church of England. The principles of such persons, as Bishop Hall told John Robinson, required them to go on to Anabaptism. This claim never could be disproved. The Pilgrims were these "Separatists." They were driven from England to Holland, and thence came to Plymouth. The charge of the Brownes the ministers repelled, declaring "that they were neither Separatists nor Anabaptists;" and "that they did not separate from the Church of England," although they came away from its errors. There was much room to make such a charge as these did, because the religious matters of the new settlers were not fixed until some little time after their arrival, when they resolved to imitate the Pilgrims, but with caution and without perfect agreement.* In doing so, they, however, only fulfilled the prediction of Robinson, that while some of these Puritans did "most sharply oppose them," (the Pilgrims) yet if they "did come to be from under the bishops, &c., they would practice the same things which they now did." † It therefore should not be forgotten, that the settlers of this city were not Pilgrims, nor even Independents, before they emigrated to this country, but members of the Church of England, who left that church with avowed regret, not as the Separatists, but because they despaired of seeing it reformed, as they judged desirable.

There are many traces of those holding Baptist sentiments among the early settlers at Plymouth, Boston, &c. Within twenty years of the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, and within ten of the arrival of the Puritan

* Felt's Annals of Salem, vol. i. pp. 93. 159.

† Young's Chronicle of the Pilgrims, pp. 45. 423.

members of the Church of England, who settled this town and Boston, we find an attempt was made to form a Baptist church at Weymouth. The names of some of those who made the attempt are preserved, as they were arraigned before the General Court for it on the 13th of March, 1639, the same month and year as the First Church in Providence was formed.* This shows that our sentiments were manifested as soon as seemed practicable, and sooner than was allowed; and that Williams and the church in Providence made only one of the attempts, but fortunately a successful one, to manifest them.

In or about the previous year, 1638, two Baptist ministers arrived in the colony of Massachusetts. One of these was Robert Wheaton, the ancestor of the late Hon. Henry Wheaton, eminent for his protracted services as our national representative at Berlin, and for his writings on international law. "He first established himself in Salem, but when the intolerance of the community led those of his persuasion to remove elsewhere, he joined Roger Williams, and assisted him in forming the now flourishing State of Rhode Island." † The other

* Backus' History of the Baptists, vol. i. pp. 113, 114, quoted in Benedict's History of Baptists, vol. i. p. 356, ed. of 1812.

† Homes of American Statesmen, p. 449. It does not appear clearly that Mr. Wheaton (Wheaden in Salem Records) was a preacher before his arrival, although so spoken of in this work. Another settler of this date was William Wickendon, (or den,) who went from this city to Providence in 1639, and after having been ordained by Rev. Chad Brown, the successor of Roger Williams, as pastor of the Baptist church there, became his colleague. He left Providence in 1652, and next appears in New York city and the neighborhood. So far as is known, he was the first preacher of our sentiments in that region, and for this was, in 1656, punished by the authorities with imprisonment. (a) Neither of these names is now

(a) Benedict (from Providence Church Records), Hist. of Baptists, i. 477. Hague's Historical Discourse, New York Recorder and Register, Feb. 21, 1855.

was Hanserd Knollys, a minister of the Church of England, who had some years before embraced Baptist sentiments, and suffered much persecution on this account. He came to Boston, and remained there and elsewhere until 1641, when he returned home at the urgent solicitation of his aged father. In the supplement to Neal's History of the Puritans, vol. ii. p. 369, it is said that Knollys continued here "about five years, preaching the gospel and building up the churches that had lately been gathered in that wilderness;" and on page 361 it is also asserted that Baptists "were among the planters of New England from the beginning." The last statement is taken from Cotton Mather.* These facts imply that these preachers knew, or expected, that they should here find those who held their sentiments.

It would be strange if this were not the case, since we know that Baptist sentiments were extensively held in England at this time. In a reference to the Westminster Assembly, which began its session in July, 1643, Rev. W. Orme says, "I believe there were no Baptists in the Assembly, though they had existed long before, were then in considerable number in the country, and could rank among themselves many excellent, and a few learned persons.† And Baillie, who was a commissioner from Scotland to this Assembly, utters a complaint, which also appears from Lightfoot's diary of that body to have been made to it, viz., "that the Baptists were growing more rapidly than any sect in the land." Their

found on the list of members of the First Church of this city; but the name of Obadiah Holmes appears there, under 1639. He became pastor of the First Baptist Church of Newport in 1652.

* Magnalia, Book vii. p. 27, ed. of 1702.

† Life of Baxter, vol. i. p. 78.

numbers and influence in Cromwell's army, and during the Commonwealth, can only be accounted for by the previous extensive prevalence of their sentiments. Baxter informs us, that "the Court New's-book told the world of the swarms of Anabaptists in our armies;"* and that they were so numerous and powerful in Ireland that many soldiers professed their sentiments "as the way to preferment." Cromwell sent his son Henry thither to put them under more restraint, and "yet to deal civilly with them." Major General Ludlow, "who headed them in Ireland," was not the only officer of this rank in Cromwell's army who avowed their religious views. One of his most distinguished soldiers, Major General Harrison, and Overton, whom Cromwell left second in command in Scotland in 1651, were Baptists. So were the Chancellor of Ireland under Cromwell, and one of the Protector's ablest admirals, the father of William Penn, and also Colonel Hutchinson, the Governor for Parliament of Nottingham Castle, whose wife will always be eminent among Christian women, while her memoirs are still reprinted and admired for their attractive representation of the events then transpiring. There were other Baptist ministers besides Knollys, above mentioned, who had received orders as priests in the Church of England.†

A part of the Pilgrims in Holland also were Baptists. Governor Bradford, in his "Dialogue, or the Sum of a Conference between some Young Men born in New England, and sundry Ancient Men that came out of Holland and Old England," 1648, says, the Dutch Ana-

* Quoted in Edinburgh Review, Oct. 1839.

† For an account of the prevalence of Baptist views in England, during the Commonwealth, see Christian Review, vol. viii.

baptists “ misled Mr. Smith and the most of his people,” who had come out with him from England to Amsterdam.* This Smith was pastor, with John Robinson, of the Church of the Pilgrims settled at Amsterdam. To avoid difficulty, Robinson and a part of the church withdrew, and went to Leyden.† Thomas Helwysse succeeded Smith, and returned with the church to London in 1614. John Canne, an eminent minister of ours, who, in the year when Roger Williams succeeded Mr. Skelton in this city, published an able assertion of “ the Necessity of Separation from the Church of England, proved by the Non-Conformists’ Principles,” was then, as he styles himself on the title-page of his work, “ Pastor of the ancient English Church in Amsterdam.” This church was first formed in London in 1592, and then removed to Holland. It was like, but distinct from that from which the American Pilgrims came.‡ From this, and other circumstances, it appears that Baptists, at this time, had charge of churches which were not exclusively Baptist.

The immersion of converted persons was not more signally the peculiarity of these Baptists of the time when New England was first settled, than their views concerning the relation of the civil government to religious matters. Nor were these views now first adopted by them. In 1572, Whitgift, afterward Queen Elizabeth’s Archbishop of Canterbury, published a work in which he charged the Baptists with asserting that “ the civil magistrate has no authority in ecclesiastical matters, and ought not to meddle in causes of religion and faith, and that no man ought to be compelled to faith and reli-

* Young’s *Chronicles of the Pilgrims*, p. 451.

† *Ibid.* pp. 22. 34.

‡ *Ibid.* pp. 24. 450.

gion.”* As infant baptism and the alliance of civil government and religion have generally been, are fitly and consistently, and from some views of infant baptism necessarily, connected, so the baptism of none but converted persons, properly and consistently, results in an entire separation of the two. And we find that the Baptists, after having in 1611, in a “Confession of Faith with certain conclusions,” asserted, “that the magistrate is not to meddle with religion, or matters of conscience, nor compel men to this or that form of religion, because Christ is the King and Lawgiver of the church and conscience;”† as early as 1615, published “a small treatise to justify their separation from the church of England, and to prove that every man has a right to judge for himself in matters of religion; and that to persecute any one on this account, is illegal, anti-christian and contrary to the laws of God, as well as several declarations of his majesty.” The title of the work is “Persecution for Religion judged and condemned,” &c. The authors of this work take care to state that “they do unfeignedly acknowledge the authority of earthly magistrates, God’s blessed ordinance, and that all earthly rule and command appertain unto them.”

In this state of things among those English Non-Conformists who were Baptists, Roger Williams came to this country; and besides views of the Church of England held by most of the Pilgrims, and disowned by the Puritans, very soon began to broach such sentiments regarding re-

* Historical Survey of Controversies pertaining to the Rights of Conscience, by Edward B. Underhill, p. 193. Hague’s Historical Discourse, p. 54.

† Tracts on Liberty of Conscience, published by Hanserd Knolly’s Society, pp. 85–180.

religious liberty, the power of civil government, and the separation of church and state, as Baptists alone held in England. These sentiments were then noticed to be Baptist, and caused the prediction that he would become "an Anabaptist." This name was then and after attached to such views to excite odium, on account of the excesses committed at Munster by some who claimed to be Anabaptists, but who were at the time disowned by the mass of German Anabaptists. These, it may be well to remark, by the way, did not hold to immersion as the only true mode of baptism, nor even completely abandon infant baptism, although they generally condemned it. The misuse of the name was similar to the present common practice in Germany, of charging on all who claim liberty for the people, all the wild schemes and infidel notions of the lowest school of French Red-republicanism.* It was for avowing these opinions that Williams came into conflict with the civil government, and finally was compelled to flee from this town to escape being carried to England. Afterwards, when at liberty, he and his followers professed to be Baptists.

He first of the citizens of Salem was charged with our sentiments. And he first of rulers practised the true principles of religious liberty in civil government, which Baptists then advocated, and he had learned from them. This is his high honor, beyond all fair dispute. The same honor is claimed for others, but they who do this, mistake

* Even Cotton Mather testifies to the perversion of this name. He says, in his *Magnalia*, b. 7, p. 26, "It hath been a sore disadvantage unto the reputation of the Anabaptist way, that wherever any reformation has been carried on, a sort of people under that name have been most unhappy impediments unto the progress of it." He then speaks of "multitudes" who were "as holy, watchful, fruitful, and heavenly people as perhaps any in the world."

toleration for religious freedom. It was only for the ^{latter} ~~latter~~ that Henry Jacob plead ; and only this, and hardly this, which was enjoyed in Holland and Maryland at or after this date.*

The peculiar views of Williams made him decline joining the church at Boston on his first arrival in the country. His two great reasons were, that its members would not publicly express penitence for having communed with the church of England, and would not admit that the civil magistrate has no right to punish transgressions of the first table of the law, i. e. religious, in distinction from social sins.

The fact of the first invitation of Williams to this city after his avowal of his opinions in Boston, shows that some of our fathers were not inimical to principles "tending to Anabaptistry," as it was then styled. This is confirmed by his recall in 1633 to assist Mr. Skelton, the pastor of the church, who approved of Williams.† Besides this, when the latter came from Plymouth, he was dismissed to do so with a reluctance, which Mr. Brewster, the elder of the church, had to exert himself to overcome by the terrors of Anabaptistry. Nevertheless, not a few left Plymouth to accompany him, that they might be under his ministry ; and the major part of the Salem church welcomed him in spite of the advice of the magistrates, and all the perils so plainly announced to them. As further evidence that the community were prepared for Williams' views, we have his own declaration that most of his church were with him in his sentiments, until they were "swayed and bowed" by his

* See note B, at the end of the Discourse.

† Felt's Annals of Salem, p. 67. (first edition.)

troubles.* As Williams now held views tending to Anabaptistry, as Brewster said, we have some grounds to suspect that they were sympathized in by some of the early settlers of Salem ; and any one who knows the difference between the Pilgrims and the Puritans, can easily see the cause of his not meeting with the same objections to his settlement in Plymouth as in Boston.

The views of the Pilgrims regarding our sentiments are further shown by their treatment of Rev. Charles Chauncy, "one of the most considerable persons," as Cotton Mather calls him, who removed to this country in its early days. He came to Plymouth in 1638, and "being conscientiously wedded to the belief that immersion in baptism, and the administration of the Lord's Supper at evening are true scriptural doctrines," he refused to settle at Plymouth, although the church offered to allow him and his colleague, Mr. Reyner, each to baptize in his own mode. He settled at Scituate with the church which came to this country with Rev. John Lthrop in 1634, and joined that settlement. This was a part of what has generally been called the first church of the English Independents, formed by Henry Jacob in 1616. It had Baptist members in it, probably from the outset. "The controversy respecting the mode of baptism had been agitated in this church before they left England, and a part had separated from it and established the first Baptist Church in England, in 1633." The date of the first church in England which was composed exclusively of Baptists, is given by others as 1653.† When Mr. Chauncy was settled, "the church at Scituate was not perfectly united," for "those that came

* *Bloudy Tenent of Persecution*, pp. xi., xii. and 372.

† *Canne's Necessity of Separation*, *Introd.* p. xix.

with Mr. Lothrop seem not all to have been fully settled on this point, and they found others in the place ready to sympathize with them.”* These seem to have prevailed, when Mr. Lothrop and his friends had removed to Barnstable in 1639; if they did not cause that removal. Chauncy preached in Scituate from 1640 to 1654, when he became President of Harvard College, on the express conditions of “forbearing to disseminate or publish any thing on either of his tenets, and promising not to oppose received doctrines” in the college.† Of him Gov. Winslow speaks in his “Brief Narration of the true Grounds or Cause of the first Planting of New England,” in which he also testifies that they “had men living amongst them, nay some in their churches, of Baptist views, whom they would leave to God “as long as they carried themselves peaceably, as they hitherto had done.”‡

Mather says that Williams, “in one year’s time, filled Salem with the principles of rigid separation tending to Anabaptism;”§ and he left his sentiments among his friends when he fled in 1636. In fact, Cotton, his great opponent, says, “I have been given to understand that the increase of concourse of people to him on the Lord’s days in private,” (after his sentence of banishment,) “to the neglect or deserting of public ordinances, and to the spreading of the leaven of his corrupt imaginations, provoked the magistrates, rather than to breed a winter’s spiritual plague in the country, to put him a winter’s

* Deane’s History of Scituate, p. 59.

† History of Harvard College, by Josiah Quincy, vol. i. pp. 25, 467.

‡ Young’s Chronicles of the Pilgrims, pp. 404, 405.

§ Benedict’s History of the Baptists, vol. i. p. 351, ed. of 1812.

journey out of the country.”* The next year we find references to those who held his views ; and the year after, others are referred to as abstaining from meeting on account of holding them ; “ probably influenced, as others began to be,” says Mr. Felt, “ by scruples about baptism.” † This was the year before Williams himself was immersed by Holliman, who was one of those just referred to.

On the 1st of July, the next year, 1639, Mr. Peters, pastor of the First Church of this city, sent to the church at Dorchester a list of ten persons excluded from his church, including Williams and his wife, all of whom but two had been at this date rebaptized. ‡ Four years after, 1643, Lady Deborah, the widow of Sir Henry Moody, Baronet, of Garesdon, in Wiltshire, Eng., who had received a grant of four hundred acres from the General Court, had then bought the farm called Swampscott, and had joined the church at Salem, April 5, 1640, was first admonished by that church for denying infant baptism, and then excommunicated. To avoid further trouble, she moved first to New York city, and then to Long Island, and was followed by “ many others ” who held her views of baptism. § The Baptists of this city, by these removals and that of Wickendon, are connected with the origin of the Baptists in the State of New York. The next year, 1644, Joseph Belknap was presented to the Quarterly Court, “ for not permitting his child to be baptized, and was ordered to be imprisoned in Boston.” And the

* See Note C, at the end of the Discourse.

† Felt's Annals, pp. 97. 113. 119, of the first edition.

‡ Felt's Annals, p. 122, first ed.

§ Valentine's History of the City of New York, p. 142; Felt's Annals, pp. 160. 530.

same year, a law to banish Baptists who would not renounce their opinions, was passed by the General Court. The next year, an eminent citizen of Salem, Townsend Bishop, was presented for neglecting baptism. He had been Commissioner of the Quarterly Court, Deputy to the General Court several times, and sustained other respectable offices. "Such cases were not unfrequent here and in the colony;" and again, in 1646, "two persons were called to account for uniting with the followers of Obadiah Holmes, a Baptist preacher," besides Mrs. Sarah Bowditch, an ancestor of the eminent mathematician of that name, who had avowed similar views with these.*

This is the substance of what can now be known of the history of Baptists in this city, during about the first twenty years from its settlement. It is sufficient to prove that their views, and views which led to theirs, were held by some of the earliest of the colonists, and were the cause of persecutions endured by those who had embraced them.

After this time until the formation of the First Church in Boston, in 1665, we find frequent references to our brethren, especially in the records of the Quarterly Court, and ordinarily for either neglecting baptism, or being rebaptized. There were indeed, a few cases in which they made open and offensive opposition to what they regarded as corruption in God's service. But they usually were moderate in expressing their convictions, considering what provocations they endured, what they were learning from England concerning resistance to error and

* Felt's Annals, pp. 160. 164. 171. 174. 200, first ed., and vol. ii. p. 579, second edition.

wrong, and what was done by the Quakers in this town at even a later day than this. In 1646, two years after the laws against Baptists above referred to were passed, Mr. Emanuel Downing of Salem, with others, having petitioned for a relaxation of these laws without effect, the substance of their petition was sent to Parliament. This was a few months after a meeting of the elders of the United Colonies at Cambridge in March, to consider answers to many publications sent over from England in favor of Baptist and Presbyterian sentiments.* One of these books was written by Rev. John Tombes, and a letter to the ministers of New England accompanied it, which was dated from the Temple in London, May 25, 1645. This he wrote, "hoping thereby to put them upon a more exact study of that controversy, and to allay their vehemency against the Baptists." † About this time occurred the arrest, imprisonment, and severe whipping of Obadiah Holmes, who had come to Lynn with Rev. John Clark to visit an aged brother named William Witter; who four months after, apparently at the next Quarterly Court, was presented for neglecting public ordinances and being rebaptized. Mr. Holmes had been a member of the church here, and had been excommunicated, "evidently," says Felt, "for joining the Baptists." ‡ In 1656, the Court of Assistants ordered a meeting of elders to consider the baptism of children; and five years after, a general Synod was assembled by the same body, to consider "who are the subjects of baptism," and the scriptural authority for a Consociation of the Churches. The practical results of the decision

* Annals of Salem, p. 173, first ed.

† Benedict, vol. i. 361, ed. 1812.

‡ Annals of Salem, pp. 184, 185, first ed.

of these questions were full of evil.* From this it is very evident that the subject of baptism presented itself in troublesome forms during the first quarter century of the existence of this and the neighboring settlements.

From 1652, onward, the traces of our sentiments in this city are more infrequent ; probably because those holding them were not harassed by ecclesiastical or civil prosecutions, as during the first twenty-five years. It is reasonable to suppose, that the uselessness of these oppressions, and the grief at them expressed by the friends of the colonists in England in urgent remonstrances, had their effect.†

Another cause of this probably was the eminence of some who early avowed Baptist sentiments. Prominent among such were Henry Dunster and Charles Chauncy, the first two Presidents of Harvard College, who together held that office for thirty-one years, from 1640 to 1671. Dunster, also, as Grahame says of Chauncy, “ was one of the greatest scholars and theologians of the age.” Chauncy has already been referred to as declining to settle at Plymouth in 1638. He believed that immersion alone is baptism, but was willing to baptize infants in this way ; Dunster believed the baptism of infants to be an utter corruption, against which he felt bound to bear public testimony in the church at Cambridge. When Mitchell, the minister of Cambridge, attempted to convince him of his errors, he says, his own faith was so shaken, that he did not dare to trust himself within reach

* Wisner's History of the Old South Church of Boston.

† See Saltonstall's, and also Vane's language, in Benedict's History of the Baptists, and the Letter of Intercession, on behalf of the Baptists, sent to the Governor of Massachusetts Colony in 1669, by Dr. Goodwyn, Dr. Owen, &c. Mather's Magnalia, book vii. p. 28.

of the "venom and poison" of his views; it being "not hard to discover that they came from the Evil One."* On account of his views, Dunster was requested to resign in 1654; and Chauncy, then on his way back to England, was urged to assume his place, on condition of not imitating his predecessor's mode of asserting his sentiments.

President Quincy says of these first two Presidents of Harvard College, "both were able, faithful and earnest. Both pious even to the excess of the standard of that quality which characterized the times. Both were learned beyond the measure of their contemporaries, and probably in this respect were surpassed by no one who has since succeeded to their chair. After years of duty unexceptionably fulfilled, both experienced the common fate of the literary men of this country at that day; thankless labor, unrequited service, arrears unpaid, posthumous applause, a doggerel dirge, and a Latin epitaph."† Mather, in his quaint way, styles Dunster the Psalmist, and Chauncy the Cadmus, of New England.

Evidence of a change of feeling towards our denomination of the most gratifying character, is furnished by the fact, that in 1718, when Elisha Callender, a graduate of Harvard College, succeeded his father as pastor of the First Baptist Church in Boston, Increase and Cotton Mather, and John Webb, three Congregational ministers of the town, performed the principal parts of the service.‡

Evidence that Baptists continued to exist in this city is found in the fact, that, in 1748, "several persons, not having clear views on the subject of infant baptism, were unanimously allowed to unite with Mr. Leavitt's, i. e.,

* Quincy's History of Harvard College, vol. i. p. 18.

† Quincy's History of Harvard College, vol. i. p. 14.

‡ Benedict, p. 389, second edition.

the Tabernacle Church." * Another illustrative fact is, that in 1772, Rev. Dr. Stillman baptized Benjamin Foster, a native of Danvers, who studied at Yale College, became eminent for his skill in the oriental languages, received the degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1792, and while pastor of the First Baptist Church of New York, died of the yellow fever in that city, August 26, 1798, aged 49 years. Thus, down to the commencement of this century, about the date of the constitution of this church, we have knowledge that Baptist sentiments were held in this city and its vicinity ; but there was no church this side of Boston until 1765, when the church in Haverhill was formed.

At the close of the last century, there were a few persons of the Baptist persuasion residing in Salem, and some members of churches at Boston, Danversport and Beverly. But the hope that they should soon have a church of their views established here, seemed utterly groundless to others than themselves.

The few who lived in this city began to assemble together for devotional meetings in 1798. About this time, a member of Dr. Barnard's society, and his wife, who was a member of the South Church, were baptized at Danversport, and thenceforward began to hold meetings on Friday evenings, in their house on Cambridge Street, next north of the South vestry. Their names were William and Bethiah Herrick.

These were generally prayer meetings, were very quietly held, and were at first unknown to more than a few. At them the presence of a minister was occasionally enjoyed, until, as the meeting became known in the

* Felt's Annals, p. 436, first edition.

neighborhood, the Baptists were frequently favored with the privilege, as they deemed it, of hearing a sermon from one of their own denomination. William Hooper, Israel Case, Joshua Young, Shubael Lovell, Samuel Shepard, Jeremiah Chaplin, Ebenezer Nelson, and Elisha Williams, besides Samuel Stillman and Thomas Baldwin, are yet remembered by some as visiting the disciples here at this period with more or less frequency. The meetings were often very interesting, and some persons ere long were converted. About 1804, the first male was baptized in the North river, between Lynn and Carpenter Streets. This was followed, in February 1804, by the baptism of Mrs. Michael Webb, near Waters' wharf, in North Salem. Rev. Elisha Williams, of Beverly, baptized her, and preached the same evening in the former house of the South church, which stood in Cambridge Street.

The first serious movement to form a Baptist church and society, is said to have been made by a gentleman who did not profess piety. He was led to it in this way. His wife, who was a member of Dr. Stillman's church, had agreed to accompany another sister to their meeting. She was called for, but unexpectedly, her husband remained at home later than usual, and on this account she was excusing herself from keeping her engagement with her friend, when he heard her, and inquired where she had intended to go. She was at first not disposed to inform him, because she supposed he would object to her attendance at such meetings in the evening. At his request, however, she told him, and he advised her to fulfil her engagement; adding that he would himself go with her, and hear the preacher.

She gladly took his advice in regard to going herself,

but felt very uneasy at the thought of his company ; especially when she learned, on arriving at the place of meeting, that the preacher was prevented in some way from keeping the appointment. William Herrick, who was a mechanic, and had enjoyed but very ordinary advantages for acquiring an education, took charge of the meeting, which was changed into a prayer-meeting. This did not at all relieve the sister whose husband had accompanied her. At the close of the service, she waited with much concern to hear how he bore his disappointment, and what impression the meeting had made on him. After speaking of the preacher's absence, he referred to the remarks of the brother who had conducted the worship, saying, " I did not suppose that carpenter could speak so well as he did." Thus, and otherwise, to the great relief of his wife, he manifested that he was not displeased with the meeting.

This gentleman was Captain Edward Russell, who not only was the first to move in establishing a Baptist Society here, but in the erection of both the first and present houses was very active, and furnished a larger share of pecuniary aid than any one else. The next day, he went to the store of the gentleman whose wife was the first female baptized here,* and informed him of his attending the meeting on the previous evening. After doing so, he stated that the place where they met was not adapted to the purpose, and that their wives ought to have a more suitable one. He then proposed to his friend to unite with him in erecting a small, convenient house of worship. They finally determined on a plan to accomplish this ob-

* Mr. Michael Webb, who was only second to Captain Russell in his exertions and liberality on behalf of the society when in its infancy.

ject at their own expense and risk. Meanwhile, the little company of baptized believers, not aware of what God was accomplishing for them, continued to pray that he would open the way for the formation of a church of their faith in this city. They were few, and in a perfectly discouraging state as to means for undertaking such an enterprise. The only gleam of earthly hope came from the standing and adequate property of the two unconverted gentlemen to whom I have referred. It appears, as above, that God was at the time inclining their hearts to promote his cause, through their affectionate regard for their wives.

The necessary arrangements were at length made, and a lot for the house obtained between the Broad Street burying ground and the South river. A location was probably selected in that quarter of the city on account of its nearness to the river, or the mill-pond, as a convenient and retired spot for administering baptism. It is handed down to us that some timbers for the frame of the building had already been drawn to the ground, when the plans were changed by the offer of Capt. James Odell to rent a lot on which to erect it near the present house, and the building then occupied by the Branch Church, which had recently been formed of late members of the Tabernacle Church.

The lot offered was accepted, and the two gentlemen mentioned erected on it a frame building, one story high, thirty-six by fifty-five feet in dimensions. Our vestry is a part of this house, which was removed to its present site early in 1807, when the portion not needed to accommodate the church was sold. It was, however, necessary, in 1827, to enlarge the building again to its present size.

This house faced the West, and stood on a high bank forty or fifty feet east of North Street, with its southern side nearly on the line of the present Odell Court. It was used on the Lord's Day for the first time in June, 1804, when Hannah C. Herrick* was baptized by Rev. Ebenezer Nelson, of South Reading. After the baptism, he preached in it from Psalm xxvii. 4. The house appears to have been used before this occasionally on week days. When the present house was built, the former one was estimated at twenty-two hundred dollars; and at this valuation, the proprietors, of whom the treasurer of the society now has a list, received a proportionate credit in purchasing pews in the new house.

A society was soon formed, which, however, was not incorporated until March 12th, 1806; and November 30th, 1804, it invited Mr. Lucius Bolles to preach to it, until there should be a church regularly organized. It appears that he had then preached for it several times, if not statedly for more than a month. Some remember that he preached here, the first time, on an evening which was memorable for a severe and unusual storm, accompanied with thunder and lightning. Such a storm occurred Tuesday, October 9th, 1804. Mr. B.'s coming here arose from a suggestion of the wife of Rev. Dr. Stillman, who accompanied him on one of his visits to this city for the purpose of preaching to the Baptists. Captain Russell and his wife shortly after went to Boston, saw Mr. Bolles, and were so much pleased with him that they secured his promise to make the visit to this city which resulted in his call. He accepted the invitation to preach

* Now Mrs. Blake. This lady, the second female baptized in Salem, was present at the preaching of this sermon.

to the society, December 20th, 1804, when it engaged to give him as his salary six hundred dollars, exclusive of his board.

On Monday, December 24th, 1804, nine brethren and fifteen sisters, with the advice and aid of Rev. William Hooper, of Berwick, Maine, and Rev. Jeremiah Chaplin, of Danversport, assembled at the house of Mr. Michael Webb,* and after proper consultation, were regularly constituted into a church of Christ. Only four of these persons are known to be still living, two of whom are females, who remain in connection with the church.

A fortnight from the following Wednesday, January 9th, was fixed on for the public recognition of the church thus constituted, and the ordination of its pastor. On account of the limited size of the house of worship of the new church, the Tabernacle was solicited, and obtained, for the services of that interesting occasion. The council to examine the candidate, and determine on the recognition of the church, was held Jan. 8th, at the house of Captain Russell, in Central Street.

The form of the recognition of the church was by a declaration of the fact made by the Rev. Thomas Baldwin, of Boston, to whom the council had assigned this service, and also the ordaining prayer. The ordination sermon was preached by Rev. Samuel Stillman, D. D., of Boston, the charge to the pastor was delivered by Rev. Hezekiah Smith, D. D., of Haverhill, who suddenly deceased before the end of the month, and the hand of fellowship was given by Rev. Elisha Williams, of Beverly. Rev. Mr. Grafton, of Newton, offered the introductory,

* Now 361 Essex Street.

and Rev. Mr. Nelson, of South Reading, the concluding prayer.*

At a time when many churches and ministers that retained the name and place of those soundly Calvinistic in faith, had actually departed from "the truth as it is in Jesus," and more were equivocal, and undecided, because inclined to depart from the faith of their fathers, it is a great satisfaction to read the decided and distinct articles of faith presented to the council by the founders of this church, as expressing their unanimous views of scriptural truth. These are still extant as then inscribed in the records of the church. And as avowed in the more private council, they were distinctly declared in the public services. The sermon was on the wisdom of the winner of souls. The text, Proverbs xi. 30, gave room for a reference to the justification of the sinner by the imputed righteousness of Christ, and for an explicit and full statement of the natural condition of the souls of men, and their destiny. And in the charge, the pastor just ordained is exhorted to preach, "the great doctrines of the Bible;" "such as the doctrine of total moral depravity, election, redemption through Christ, regeneration, effectual calling, adoption, justification through the righteousness of Christ, sanctification by the Spirit of God, the final perseverance of the saints, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment, with future rewards and punishments; and also the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead." †

* Not one of the council, composed of twenty-nine members from nineteen churches, survives. Of those then present, the only survivor who has since been a minister, is Rev. Augustus Bolles, of Colchester, Conn., an elder brother of Rev. Lucius Bolles.

† Sermon, etc., at the ordination of Rev. L. Bolles, p. 24.

These articles have been reprinted several times, and, like the faith of the church, are essentially the same now as at the first. The only change, excepting verbal ones, has reference to the limitation of the atonement. The view originally expressed possibly was, that it has no reference except to the elect of God.* This view of it is not now avowed, because not held.

Now began the existence of this body as a church fully organized. In his sermon, Rev. Dr. Stillman refers to his desire that Mr. Bolles should have remained as colleague with him in Boston, and the manifest leadings of Providence which had decided the young minister as to his duty, and won the consent and approval of his revered instructor and pastor. Rev. Dr. Sharp, the venerable and most judicious friend of your first minister, who was intimate with him thirty years, and was his pastor the last ten years of his life, in his discourse at his funeral, remarks, that he "was just the man to go to the town of Salem at that time, and on that errand." His character, at that time, led his friends to form such an opinion of him; his life, and the history of the church, enabled his pastor to speak thus with great confidence when his earthly course had closed.

Many of you cherish in your own remembrance, a better acquaintance with your first pastor than another can impart to you. But as he alone of your five ministers both began his ministry with you, and has closed it and his life prior to this day, it seems fit to place on record some memorial of one, to whom, under God, this church

* The original words are: "it was only intentionally designed for the elect of God and the sheep of Christ;" which more probably were intended to express the views of Andrew Fuller. See Morris' Fuller, p. 264; Church Records, latter part of 1821.

and society are more indebted than to any other man for their growth and prosperity, their unusual freedom from internal dissension, and the pleasant review we may to-day take of the past half-century.

Lucius, the sixth son of David Bolles, a Baptist minister, was born Sept. 25th, 1779, at Ashford, Conn., and died in Boston, Jan. 5th, 1844, in the sixty-fifth year of his age. He was brought up in the fear of the Lord by his pious parents; but it was not until his second year in college, 1799, that he rejoiced in hope of the mercy of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Having graduated in 1801, "he placed himself under the instructions of that most amiable, accomplished, and eloquent preacher, Rev. Dr. Stillman."* For three years, he enjoyed the benefit not only of his direction in his studies, and when not himself preaching, of hearing him who "was scarcely equalled by any other preacher," but of observing his whole course of procedure in both the meetings and business of the church, in visiting the sick and poor, and in advising and guiding the various applicants for his spiritual counsel, whether perplexed and tempted Christians, or awakened sinners. At the end of this time he became pastor of this church, and retained that office until June, 1826, when his release from it was requested, and obtained of the church, by the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, that he might become its Corresponding Secretary. He, however, continued to be the senior pastor of the church, without discharging any of the duties of the office, until August 6th, 1834, when he and Mrs. Bolles removed their membership to the Charles Street Church in Boston. The failure of his health made it necessary

* This, and several subsequent quotations, are taken from the sermon preached by Rev. D. Sharp, D. D., at the funeral of Rev. L. Bolles.

for him to resign his office in the Board of Missions, September 30th, 1842. The acceptance of his resignation, "with the most unaffected reluctance and grief," was accompanied by resolutions expressing the high esteem of the Acting Board, and requesting his visits to the rooms, and what aid his health might permit him, or his inclination dispose him, to render at them. He lived but a year and a quarter after this act; the failure of his health, which then had for more than a year been perceptible, continuing until his decease.

A large number of you were "witnesses how holily, and justly, and unblamably he behaved himself among you that believe: as ye know how he exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you as a father doth his children, that you would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory." 1 Thess. ii. 10-12. The qualities that rendered him peculiarly the fit man to be the first minister of this church were, his fervent zeal, his unwearied diligence in every pastoral duty, his kind and sympathizing disposition, his thorough education, his intelligent acquaintance with evangelical truth and devoted love of it, his very rare skill in dealing with men and conducting both secular and ecclesiastical affairs, his peculiar self-control, and his unflinching good sense. The occasion will not permit us not to refer to him also as a preacher. He had talents and power to gather a large congregation from a community that looked with a disfavor on his sentiments, which many felt towards him as a Baptist, who did not as an evangelical preacher. His immediate successor has described his preaching in those days as possessing "the graces of a natural, energetic, and polished oratory." In this he agrees with a witness who, at the time of its delivery,

spoke of his dedication sermon as “truly appropriate, and crowded with that pathos and eloquence which in his discourses are characteristic ;” and added, that “the whole performance was appropriate and admirable.”* Like the ancient city of God, this church and society were “built in troublous times.” Bearing this in mind, every one must feel that the increase of the church and congregation, the peculiar harmony characterizing the history of both, with their united liberality in contributing their means for religious and charitable uses at home and abroad, and the permanent hold of the instructions and influence of your first pastor, although nearly thirty years have now passed since he laid aside the duties of this office, constitute a testimony to his pastoral character as adequate as it is rarely matched.

Evident tokens of Divine approval followed the settlement of Mr. Bolles, in the increase of the congregation and the church. When the church, in September, 1805, was received into the Warren Association, it had grown from twenty-four to seventy-two members ; or three times its number when organized less than a year before.

This increase was not witnessed with indifference by other churches in the city, for most of the growing body were taken from their congregations. Nor were they merely sensible of losing them. They felt, as well, their adoption of views in important points different from those commonly held in the community, but which, yet, the formation of the church brought to light as previously entertained by some members of the existing churches.† Unpleasant as it is to recall the fact, yet for the sake of

* Salem Register, January, 1806.

† See a Quaker lady’s testimony, in the Massachusetts Baptist Magazine, vol. i.

historical accuracy, it seems necessary to quote the statement of Dr. Sharp, that "this new movement awakened a spirit of jealousy and opposition, resulting in many an unkind representation and ungenerous aspersion."

But amid all the opposition encountered, and notwithstanding the attempts made to diminish the influence of the young preacher of new sentiments, and to hinder the increase of his church and society, it grew with surprising rapidity, and with equal respectability and strength. No prejudices against Baptists as enthusiasts and ignorant intermeddlers, nor against their ministers as "illiterate, bigoted, and promoters of disorder,"* repressed the growth of the new body. Baptists became known to this community as equal in intelligence to others, and as having a ministry in this city as refined and well educated as any of other denominations; while in Williams, and Chaplin, and Smith, and Baldwin, and Stillman, of the neighborhood, God had given them ministers less frequently equalled by those of any denomination than surpassed, in ardent piety, fervent zeal, native talent and thorough education.

The records of the church show that at least once a month, for more than a year after its formation, members were received by it. And those who were thus gathered into the church were truly united in Christian affection. They sympathized with each other, and watched over each other with tender regard and great profit. The objections made to the reception of some applicants for membership, and the vigilant and faithful discipline of the members, plainly enough evince thorough care for the purity of God's house, as well as joy in its enlargement.

* Sharp's Sermon, pp. 18, 19.

The first house was even less attractive within than in its exterior. Yet it soon became inadequate to accommodate the congregation, although the large new house of the South Church had been dedicated only eight days before Mr. Bolles was ordained, and two new religious societies had been commenced in the town, the one the year before,* and the other the year after,† this church was organized.‡

In one year from the time when the first house was opened for religious worship, and less than six months from the constitution of the church, steps began to be taken to erect an edifice better suited to accommodate the increasing congregation. May 17th, 1805, the society voted to build the house in which we are now assembled. It had, the month before, purchased of James Odell the land on which it stands, without its present front, but with a passage-way to North Street, twenty-seven feet in width. The following are the names of the committee appointed to take the business in charge, viz., Edward Russell, John Page, William Luscomb, Benjamin Webb, Daniel H. Mansfield, Ebenezer Seccomb, John Grant, Samuel Sweetser, and James Odell.

The new house was dedicated January 1st, 1806, when Mr. Bolles preached an appropriate sermon from 1 Kings viii. 28, 29. At this time the galleries were not finished. They were, however, not long left in this state, on

* Howard Street, December 29, 1803.

† Universalist, 1805.

‡ Mr. Bolles, in his Dedication Sermon, p. 17, remarks, that "a desire of seats had been expressed which for months past could not be indulged. Proposals were made at different times for enlarging the house; but to this there were insuperable objections. It could not be made convenient, especially for the poor, whose salvation is of equal importance with others, but who have not the means of furnishing themselves with pews."

account of the demand for the accommodations which they could afford. The new house and land cost nearly fourteen thousand dollars. The number of pews on its floor was one hundred, of which at first eighty-two were sold. At the completion of the sale of the whole house, the number that had been sold was one hundred and twenty-six. The results of the sale were such as to meet all the expenditures within about one thousand dollars, and furnish a congregation equalled in numbers by only a few of the older societies in the city. Since the opening of the house, the purchase of three lots to constitute the front on Federal Street, with the various improvements which have given the house and lot their present aspect, have increased the cost of the property to the entire sum of nearly thirty thousand dollars.

In 1805, two events of interest to the church happened. Its first deacon, Ithuriel Hinman, was chosen, Jan. 31st, and served alone until Jan. 8th, 1808, when Warwick Palfray was elected his associate. Deacon Hinman served the church in his office "with the greatest satisfaction," as the record of his resignation states, until Feb. 22d, 1811, when he removed to Bristol, Conn.

April 1st, 1805, the pastor laid before the church the request of members of the late orthodox Congregational Church at Sedgwick, Maine, for their aid in a council to examine them, with their minister, Rev. Daniel Merrill, as candidates for baptism, and, if advisable, to constitute them into a Baptist church. The church complied with the request, but Mr. Bolles was not able to attend the council. Rev. Dr. Baldwin, with Rev. Messrs. Elisha Williams, of Beverly, and John Pitman, of Providence, sailed from this city, May 8th, 1805, to attend to this business. Sixty-six were baptized May 13th, 1805, in-

cluding Mr. Merrill and his wife ; which number soon after was increased to one hundred and twenty of the late members of the Congregational church.*

This was one of the "different circumstances," which, as the biographer of Rev. Dr. Worcester says,† contributed at this time "to make the subject of baptism a topic of incessant inquiry and dispute." Dr. W. therefore "thought it best to exhibit to his own people his views of all the points in dispute," in two discourses on the covenant of God with Abraham and his seed. This led to the reply of Dr. Baldwin, and the letters of Dr. Worcester in reply to him, in which, as usual, the friends of each party were confident that the champion of his views was completely victor. The pastor of this church did not publish any thing in connection with the controversy ; and the tradition is, that he was content with the results to his views of the truth that followed from the defence of the Abrahamic covenant by his able Pedobaptist neighbor. The support of infant baptism employed by Rev. Dr. Worcester, was such as Pedobaptist scholars have now generally abandoned,‡ and the common people never did accept with any readiness, nor hold with any firmness or distinctness of apprehension.

In 1806, we find a reference to the first benevolent society connected with this church. Mr. Bolles gave notice, October 3d, of receiving two hundred dollars from the "Cent Society," which he had applied to the purchase of the church plate for communion-service. After this, until the close of 1808, little occurred in our

* Mass. Baptist Magazine, vol. i. pp. 124. 144.

† Life and Labors of Worcester, vol. i. p. 442.

‡ See, for instance, Halley on the Sacraments, and almost all the recent German theologians.

history worthy of special note, excepting the meeting of the Warren Association with the church in 1807. For nearly eight months before July, 1809, Mr. Bolles did not meet with the church in consequence of severe and protracted sickness. Nor did he for some time after this enjoy his usual vigor, as appears from his inability to administer baptism to the large number of candidates received during the remainder of this year, and through the next. For just at this time the Holy Spirit was poured out, and the largest number ever reported by this church as baptized in one year, was reported to the Association in September, 1810, as having been baptized during that year. It was one hundred and thirty-five. This was a year of continued and deep religious interest, which is still remembered by some who remain among us; but no more definite information regarding it has been acquired than is given in these few words.

During this revival, Feb. 2d, 1810, the first steps were taken to collect our useful church library, which was designed in part for the pastor's benefit, and ultimately numbered nearly three hundred volumes. About the same time also, eight members were dismissed to form the church in Marblehead, which was constituted Feb. 28th, 1810.

The next year, Nov. 13th, the Evangelical Tract Society was formed by Baptists in Boston, and Mr. Bolles was a member of its first executive committee. This society, organized three years before the American Tract Society, was the first general one for religious objects formed in this region among Baptists, excepting the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society, now called the Massachusetts Baptist Convention, which was formed in 1802.

In 1811, Mr. Bolles, with Dr. Baldwin and Elisha

Williams, signed a circular connected with a petition to the General Court, for the relief of citizens of this commonwealth holding religious views different from those held by the majority of their respective townsmen. Many previous efforts had in vain been made to secure religious freedom in Massachusetts. From 1786 until this time, all the citizens of a town and the property in it had been taxed for the support of religious worship. But a proviso of the Bill of Rights was resorted to, that those who dissented from the majority of the town in their religious views, might reclaim the tax thus paid, in order to apply it to the support of the public worship in which they participated. To do this, however, a suit at law was often necessary; and this year, Chief Justice Parsons, of the Supreme Court, had ruled, that this privilege could be enjoyed by none but members of an incorporated religious society. Many Baptist congregations were opposed to incorporation, for other sufficient reasons besides, or as well as, conscientious opposition to this form of supporting religion by law. This ruling of the Supreme Court was very oppressive. It aroused an irresistible opposition; and in June of this year a change was effected which was more favorable, although still oppressive. This made the certificate of the committee of any religious society appointed for this purpose, exempt its members from taxation to support any other form of worship. This certificate was required until, in 1833, the necessary change was made in the Constitution of this State, to establish our present religious freedom; which thus was not enjoyed until more than two hundred years after Plymouth was settled.

The succeeding year, 1812, is very memorable in the annals of this church, and of missionary operations, as

well as in our national history. June 19th, Congress declared war with England. This church, a few months after, united with others in forming the Boston Association, which held its first meeting in this house. But the year will be remembered by all who are interested in religious affairs, as that in which, on the 12th of March, the mission premises at Serampore were destroyed by fire. This very heavy loss, amounting to sixty thousand dollars, made an irresistible appeal to the liberality of Christians of all denominations. Before intelligence of this calamity had reached us, the Rev. William Johns, D. D., an English Baptist missionary, visited our country on his way to India, and made addresses to impart information, and solicit aid, in reference to the versions of the Scriptures which Carey and his associates at Serampore were preparing for circulation. He preached in this house on the Sabbath, Jan. 26th, 1812, and his discourse made an impression on the community, which at the time secured the large contribution of one thousand dollars, and is not yet forgotten by some who heard it. This discourse was followed, a week from the next Thursday, Feb. 6th, by the memorable first ordination of American missionaries to foreign lands, in the meeting house of the Tabernacle church. The interest awakened by these two circumstances led to the formation, April 23d, 1812, in the vestry of this church, of the first society among American Baptists that contemplated foreign missions. It received the name of "The Salem Bible Translation and Foreign Mission Society." Its object was declared to be, not only to aid Dr. Carey and his associates in translating the Scriptures, but "if deemed advisable at any time, to assist in sending a missionary or missionaries from this country to India." The officers elected at the

organization of the society were, Rev. Lucius Bolles, President. Michael Webb, Vice President. Ebenezer Seecomb, Treasurer. John Moriarty, Corresponding Secretary. Michael Shepard, Recording Secretary. John Page, Stephen Webb, Charles H. Orne, Robert Upton, Eliphalet Kimball, and Nathaniel W. Williams, Trustees.

It appears from a letter of Mr. Judson to Mr. Bolles, that, prior to his departure for India, he had in conversation expressed the hope that the Baptists of this country would ere long follow the noble example of their English brethren in forming a foreign missionary society. That eminent minister of Christ, while doing this, little thought that he was himself, in another way, to arouse our denomination to engage in such labors; and was to continue to serve it in this department for nearly forty years. Judson having, on his voyage, changed his sentiments, through study by which he designed to prepare himself to meet the Baptist Missionaries at Serampore, was baptized there, and by them, with his wife, Sept. 5th, 1812.*

The society thus formed here, continued to be an efficient auxiliary to the general society subsequently formed for the objects which it contemplated until 1839, when it was dissolved, not from diminished interest, but as unnecessary. It was two years after this society was constituted, May 18th, 1814, that "The General Missionary

* March 4th, 1813, the treasurer of this society was directed to send to the treasurer of the English Baptist Missionary Society the funds on hand, that they might be sent to Dr. Carey, and be appropriated, one half to aid the mission at Serampore, and the other to the support of Mr. Judson, if necessary. Thus this society had the honor to give the first aid Judson received from any society of his Baptist brethren in America.

Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States of America for Foreign Missions," was organized at Philadelphia.

In September of this year, 1814, the Massachusetts Baptist Education Society was formed at the meeting of the Boston Association, to which this church then belonged. Messrs. Bolles and Chaplin were prominent, if not the prime movers to establish this new organization.* This society was formed a year before the American Education Society, but it had been preceded by two years in its formation by the Baptist Education Society of the Middle States.† Early as these dates are, they are not the earliest signs of the deep concern of our denomination to educate thoroughly those whom God had called to the ministry. The minutes of the Warren Association, at the beginning of this century, refer to an education fund, which was first established in 1791. The Charleston Association had taken the same step the same year, and the Philadelphia Association about thirty years before. It is also well known that Brown University, which began its existence just ninety years since, 1764, was distinctly designed to be a servant of the Baptist churches in this respect. At its session in 1764, the Philadelphia Association, which had been very active in establishing the college, commended it to the liberality of the churches.‡ But long before this, "the General Assembly of Baptized Churches," which met in London in 1689, determined to raise a fund with this as one of its objects: "To assist those members that shall be found in any of the aforesaid churches that are disposed for study,

* Sharp's Funeral Sermon.

† Benedict's Hist. of Baptists, vol. ii. p. 449, ed. 1812.

‡ Minutes of Philadelphia Baptist Association, 1707 to 1807, pp. 464, 465.

have an inviting gift, and are sound in fundamentals, in attaining to the knowledge and understanding of the languages, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. These members to be represented to the nine brethren in London, by any two of the churches that belong to this assembly.”*

The Massachusetts Baptist Education Society took charge of applicants for its help, and appointed their instructors. Dr. Chaplin, of Danvers, was their favorite theological teacher; and not without reason, as his subsequent career as, first, the theological professor, and, then, the President of Waterville college evinced.

The new society was cordially received among our charities; and only the week after its formation, a member of the Haverhill church, or society, John Cornish, Esq., left it by will a munificent donation of twenty-four thousand dollars, which he designed ultimately to come into its exclusive possession.† Here closed the first ten years of the history of this church, on the same day on which our treaty of peace with England was concluded at Ghent, December 24th, 1814.

From this period, for seven years, the records of the church indicate that its history was only characterized by the usual experience of blessings, mingled with the trials made necessary by the faithful administration of its discipline. March 15th, 1816, sixteen were dismissed to form the church in Lynn. November 20th, 1817, the present senior deacon of the church, Joshua Upham, was chosen. The next year, an attempt was made to establish a Sabbath school. June 5th, 1818, it was voted by the church to be “inexpedient to commence one at present,” because the pastor, aided by female members of

* Ivimey's History of the Baptists.

† Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine, vol. iv. p. 122.

the church, met the children once a fortnight, on Wednesday, for religious instruction. In Felt's "Annals of Salem," this church is, however, said to have formed a Sabbath school society on the 13th of August of this year.

The year 1821 was one of special Divine favor to this church. In March, it appears that the vestry could not accommodate all who were disposed to attend the meetings on Tuesday evenings, and they were therefore transferred to the meeting-house. In June, there was a special prayer-meeting for the continuance, the records say, of "the work of grace which God has for about two months past been carrying on in our society and in the town."

This year it became necessary to reprint the Articles of Faith of the Church, and some desired a modification of one of them, probably the sixth. The committee appointed to consider the subject, recommended the adoption of the revised articles of the Second Church in Boston. Mr. Bolles stated, that the sentiments expressed in them were the same as in those of this church, but "clothed in language varying a little from them." After protracted, but amicable discussion, it was at length voted, by ballots handed in November 30th, to make no change in the Articles of Faith.

On the occurrence of the twentieth anniversary of the formation of the church, the pastor reviewed its history, furnishing an interesting account of its rise and progress. This was not a public discourse; and his successor in vain sought among his papers, ten years ago, for some trace of the account thus furnished.

Always the devoted and liberal friend of a thorough preparation for the office of the ministry, Mr. Bolles

“ was one of the earliest, if not the first, in 1825, to attempt to raise a theological school somewhere in Boston, or its vicinity ; and in January went to Lynn, Boston, and Cambridge, with a view to converse with some of the ministers and private brethren on the subject.” * From these labors and consultations arose the Newton Theological Institution.

The usual course of things now prevailed until the necessity for a new church of our sentiments became apparent, from the inadequacy of this house to accommodate the church and society. The subject was introduced at a meeting of the church, November 26th, 1824. The course then taken was a model for all similar enterprizes. A committee of four was appointed to ascertain and report to the church what encouragement might appear to attempt to build another house of worship. They reported favorably. A subscription was made for the object, and the erection of a house was entrusted to a committee of brethren. They accomplished the work so faithfully and expeditiously, that notice was given, October 21st, 1825, that those members of this church who wished to unite in forming the new church, for which the house was nearly completed, should notify the church-clerk of their desire, before November 11th, to enable him then to read their names to the church. This was not done, however, until January 6th, 1826 ; when the names of eleven brethren and twenty sisters were thus reported to the church, which unanimously dismissed them for the purpose indicated. Seven others subsequently were dismissed for the same object. The second church was thus formed January 19th, 1826, with perfect unanimity, and

* Baptist Missionary Magazine, vol. xxiv. p. 56.

without throwing on those who made the sacrifice of parting from old and endeared associates, the burden of providing for themselves a house in which to worship God. The new house was dedicated Thursday, June 8th, Rev. Daniel Sharp preaching on the occasion from John iv. 24.

The Friday evening previous, June 2d, was made memorable by the presentation of a letter to the church from the gentleman just mentioned, notifying it of the selection of its pastor as Corresponding Secretary of the Board of Missions, and requesting its consent to relinquish him for that service. The pastor had thrown the decision of the matter on the church; his interest in the operations of the Board, then "languishing and embarrassed," and his diminished strength to perform the onerous duties required by his large congregation, having made him willing to accept the appointment. The church referred the matter to a committee, and appointed a prayer-meeting to ask Divine direction in the emergency which had arisen. The committee reported the next week several resolutions, expressing the affection and confidence which the church felt towards its pastor, yet recommending his acceptance of the appointment; and desiring him still to retain the nominal relation of senior pastor of the church, when his successor should have been obtained. This action was communicated to the society, and conformed to by it. The church then appointed a meeting for "solemn prayer to God, that he would be pleased to send them one who should prove a blessing to them, and to their children." On Tuesday evening, the twentieth of the same month, after public service, the church extended an unanimous invitation to Rev. Rufus Babcock, of Poughkeepsie, N. Y., to become its pastor. The society joining with unanimity in this call, Mr.

Babcock accepted the invitation, and on the 23d of August was installed in the new house of worship ; when, also, Mr. George Leonard was ordained as pastor of the Second Church. Rev. Daniel Sharp preached also on this occasion, from Romans i. 16.

Thus closed the active ministry of the first pastor of this church. At this time the church numbered three hundred and ten members ; but four hundred and seventy-seven had been baptized during his pastorship. Of his successor, who still survives, actively serving the cause of Christ as Corresponding Secretary of the American and Foreign Bible Society, you need no account from me, while you have so lively a recollection of the pleasure with which you enjoyed his services, and the success which crowned them.

The year 1827 was a notable one in the history of this church. The meeting for fasting and prayer on the first Monday in January, was held in the vestry, at that time only about half as large as at present. The day was very stormy, and the attendants few, but the exercises were very interesting ; and then began a religious awakening, which continued almost through the summer. In September, eighty were reported to the Association as having been baptized during the previous year.

March 23d, 1827, the church appointed a committee with reference to the enlargement of the vestry. This resulted in securing, by July following, the addition which gave it its present dimensions. July 13th, 1828, the church first took general action on the subject of using intoxicating beverages ; and, in 1832, it stated to the Association that for four years previous, members had been received into its fellowship only on condition of total abstinence from them.

In the two years 1831 and 1832, the church received large additions. Forty-five were reported as baptized in 1831, and eighty-five in 1832. These years are memorable in the ecclesiastical history of our country generally, for wide-spread and thorough revivals of religion, and the consequent large increase of the disciples of Christ. When more than usual interest had for some time been apparent, a peculiar meeting, then frequently and successfully employed, was held by this church, in connection with the Second, and with much good effect. It was called "a four-days meeting." Ministers were invited from the neighborhood to render assistance. So many did so, that no one preached more than one sermon. The meeting was held on the first two days in the second house, and on the last two, in this one. These meetings greatly increased the awakening previously felt; and the two churches, with their pastors, rejoiced over a large number of converts to Christ.

The year 1833, when the organ now used was placed in this house, is memorable in our history, because, on the 24th of April, the nineteenth annual meeting of the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions was held with this church. At this session, a step far-reaching in its consequences, and of the highest moment from the principles involved, was taken by the Board. Its immediate occasion was the completion of the translation of the New Testament in Burmese. Resolutions were then passed which enjoined on our missionaries the translation of the Scriptures, in all cases, in as literal and exact accordance with the original languages as possible. Although Christian faithfulness permitted no other course to be taken by us, yet this step put it out of the power of the American Bible Society to render its accustomed

aid to our versions ; in consequence of the principles on which different denominations unite in supporting that Society. A vote to this effect was passed by it in 1836. Hence arose the question, whether a separate organization for translating and distributing the Bible should be formed by our denomination, or this work should be done through our Board of Foreign Missions. The latter, as the simpler plan, commended itself to many who loved the Bible Society, who saw that its fundamental principles required the action which it took, and who desired still to coöperate with it as far as they could ; but to the majority, including the President of the General Convention, a new Society seemed advisable, and was therefore formed at Philadelphia, in 1837. The result of this course, beyond all doubt, has been the contribution of a larger amount for the foreign distribution of the sacred Scriptures than would otherwise have been secured.

On the 11th of October of this year, Rev. Rufus Babcock informed the church of his acceptance of the presidency of Waterville College, in Maine, and offered his resignation of his charge as its pastor. In accepting this resignation, the church with great reluctance only yielded to what Mr. Babcock judged to be the call of duty.

The relation of senior and junior pastor, so often with difficulty made harmonious, was maintained by your two first ministers throughout the term of the second one's ministry. And this one bore witness in this house, ten years since, that during the continuance of the relation, " he never experienced aught but advantage and pleasure from the union." Two hundred and sixty-eight had been baptized by Mr. Babcock while he was your pastor ; and just before his resignation, the number of the members of the church was reported to the Association as five

hundred and sixteen. This is the largest number at the end of any year of the history of the church.

The church requested and enjoyed the continuance of Mr. Babcock's services until the close of the year. The ensuing 7th of March, at a meeting of the church, an invitation to the pastorship was given to Rev. R. H. Neale, then of South Boston. The society afterwards concurred in this vote. It was, however, not accepted by that gentleman. June 12th, a similar invitation was given to Rev. John Wayland, who was at that time professor in Hamilton College, at Clinton, New York. On the 4th of July, the church received his acceptance of the call, which was followed by his public installation on the 6th of the next month. Rev. Francis Wayland, D. D., preached on the occasion. Thus again was the church possessed of a pastor harmoniously and joyfully settled.

On the same day, at a meeting of the church, Rev. Dr. Bolles and his wife, who had now for some length of time resided in Boston, requested and received a letter of dismissal from this church to the Charles Street Church in that city. This letter of dismissal was accompanied by another from this church to Rev. Dr. Bolles, which Rev. Dr. Sharp quoted in the sermon at his funeral, as an "honorable testimony to his character and usefulness, and creditable to the good feelings of his people."

Mr. Wayland's services were enjoyed by the church until the close of 1841. His resignation was offered September 10th, but was not finally accepted until November 12th. While he was pastor, nothing that now demands attention occurred in the history of the church, excepting an awakening of interest in 1839. But the church held him in high esteem for his faithful, instruc-

tive, and very able exhibitions of Divine truth. Sixty-three were baptized in this period; and the whole number of members in 1841, was four hundred and twenty-seven.

Early the next year, Mr. Thomas D. Anderson was invited to preach by the committee appointed to supply the pulpit. On the 11th of February, 1842, he was unanimously invited to become the minister of this church and society. He accepted the invitation, and was ordained March 15th; Rev. R. H. Neale preaching the sermon on the occasion. Mr. Anderson entered on his labors at one of the favored times with which God has so often blessed his churches in our land. This, as well as the preceding and following, was a "year of the right hand of the Most High" to a multitude of churches. The religious awakening was soon apparent in this congregation. Nothing novel preceded it, or indicated its approach, except the fresh and deep interest of the members of the church in the prayer and conference meetings, accompanied by an aroused sense of unfaithfulness, and an earnest desire for the salvation of the impenitent. Twenty-three were baptized in the spring and early part of the summer of 1842. In the fall, an increase of interest was afresh manifested, in which the Second Church shared with this. Before long, the number of meetings was increased. They were held in the vestry, or elsewhere, every evening, excepting three Saturday evenings, for nearly four months. The results to the church were greatly advantageous, on account of the exertions made by its members for their own growth in piety, and the salvation of others; while the number baptized at this time was reported to the Association, in 1843, as eighty-nine. Amidst this religious revival, the Second

Church invited Rev. Jacob Knapp to labor with them ; and he came here for that purpose, November 11th, 1842. This church did not accept their invitation to unite with them in soliciting and participating in his services. At this time, other congregations in the city also shared in the awakened feelings and consequent blessings which were so largely enjoyed by the two Baptist churches. During this revival, February 17, 1843, four members were dismissed from this church, to aid in founding the church in South Danvers. And it was shortly after it, January 5, 1844, that Rev. L. Bolles, D. D., died.

In 1845, this church and congregation had the pleasure of welcoming among them Rev. Adoniram Judson, who had sailed from this city in 1812, as one of the first company of foreign missionaries ever sent from our country to the heathen of other lands. By marrying for his second wife, a member of this church, the widow of Rev. George D. Boardman, he was felt to be more intimately connected with us than he otherwise would have been. His recent severe affliction in the loss of this estimable lady on the homeward voyage, added to the interest of his visit to the city and the church in which her early home had been.

In 1848, the health of Rev. Mr. Anderson had become so impaired, that, on the 23d of January, he publicly tendered his resignation of the charge of the church and society. This was accepted January 28th, and its acceptance was accompanied by resolutions expressive of the gratitude of the church, "for his fidelity in the discharge of his pastoral duties," and sympathy in the affliction which made necessary the dissolution of the relation he had sustained to it. While Mr. Anderson was pastor,

one hundred and twenty-two persons were baptized ; and at the Association in 1848, the whole number of members reported was four hundred and fourteen.

March 24th ensuing, the church invited the minister now serving it, to assume the office of its pastor. The society concurred, and the invitation was accepted. The services of recognition took place June 14th, 1848, when Rev. Barnas Sears, D. D., preached the sermon. Few now belonging to the church are ignorant of the course of events during the remainder of the years constituting the half-century of its existence. It may be best, however, to put on record, that the house and land received their present improved form in the years 1850, 1851, and 1853.

Substantially in this way, has God led this church and congregation from their feeble origin to the present date. Much of their history is not on record ; and much is here omitted, which is even necessary for a complete view of their course. Little, for instance, has been said of their liberal contributions to benevolent objects abroad, and to the poor belonging to them ; and less of the plans by which these subjects have received systematic attention. Were it fit, it would not be possible, to state the aggregate of even the more important sums now referred to. It is better to be grateful for the evidence that any good has been done at our hands, and bury the recollection of the means employed in our deep consciousness of unfaithfulness.

The review thus taken awakens reflections which must not all be suppressed. The first is, the great debt of gratitude which this church and society owe to God. From the outset, an unusual Divine favor attended the attempt to establish a Baptist church in this city. Al-

though its members were few, feeble, and holding views regarded as unwelcome, if not hurtful, the number of converts as well as congregation increased beyond the anticipations of both the founders of the enterprise, and the rest of the community. A large congregation occupied this house as soon as it was completed. The society was never embarrassed by debt, and very soon met its expenses by the income of its pews. In the management of all its affairs, a spirit of forbearance and conciliation, growing out of mutual attachment, has always prevailed. In even the formation of a new church, and the dismissal and election of pastors, a remarkable unanimity has been enjoyed, although the circumstances have not always been free from difficulty. The same fact is true of all plans laid to improve the property of the society. A majority has, as far as we know, never used its power to coerce a minority into its measures ; while the entire body has always “sought the things that make for peace.”

We may hope that the church has contributed largely, if not mainly, to give the society this character. Kindness and brotherly love have made its members harmonious in their counsels and action. They have sought each other's benefit, the good of the community, and the highest welfare of man. They have generally been conscious of personal responsibility to God regarding their fellow-men ; and have sometimes, with joyful and successful diligence, labored to save them. They have not spared their property from the service of God, and he has blessed them with means with which to serve him.

These are the instrumentalities which God appears to have used in making the course of this church so pleasant to review. Our fathers said, “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name, give glory !” and so we

repeat, while recalling the way in which the grace of God has worked by both the fathers and the children. And if a prominent place in many important movements of our denomination, has been assigned to this church and society in this discourse ; not ostentation has induced it, but accuracy of statement has required it. The providence of God caused the facts to be as they are here recorded.

The church has now its fifth pastor, has had eleven deacons, besides the five now serving it in that office. It has also had five clerks, and five treasurers, and has licensed for the ministry fourteen of its members. The whole number of persons that have belonged to the church is 1205 ; of whom 958 have been received into it by baptism, and 304 have been taken from it by death. The number of members reported to the last Association was 386.

Another reflection arises from the contrast between the end of fifty years and its beginning. In many respects, "better is the end of the thing than the beginning," as Solomon says. From some points of view, and to a jaundiced eye, the disciples of Christ may seem to have gained nothing in the proportion of their members to the world, and made on it no marks of their influence, that are worth any congratulations. Men always have been impatient at God's ways, both in blessing and punishing our world. They make their lives the measure of all duration, and think that whatever is not done while they are making the journey of life, never will be done. Eighteen hundred years, so long a space to many, are not one half the time consumed merely to prepare our race for the open way of return to God ; and we stand, in respect to the gospel and the recovery of man, only

where Noah stood, in respect to the fall of man, two hundred years after the flood. We should, therefore, expect but little to be done in fifty years. This renders it amazing that God has, in that time, through his servants, wrought so much which can now be definitely pointed out as gain to his cause.

The position of evangelical truth in the chief city of this State, fifty years ago, has already been referred to ; and also in Yale College, in which Dwight was then contending with French infidelity as the predominant influence there, at the same time that it prevailed elsewhere. Dr. Alexander says of about the same time in Virginia, "I had never heard of any conversion among the Presbyterians." In our own city, the Christian is living who testifies, that a few with whom he used to hold a prayer-meeting, found it necessary to court concealment, for the purpose of avoiding molestation; and at a later day, the first attempts to establish a Sabbath school were openly resisted. The missionary labors of Christians among the heathen, just entered on in England, were derided in the highest quarters ; as when the *Edinburgh Review*, vol. xiv. p. 48, sneered at the idea of converting "60,000,000 of Hindoos by four men and sixteen guineas." Besides this, the attempt was actually made to obtain the suppression of these missions by government. In even our own community, unless I am misinformed, there has been not only a great and grateful change in respect to the influence of evangelical Christianity, but also in the general state of society. Some of the latter class refer to social habits regarding the use of intoxicating beverages, the number of inebriates encountered in the streets, in proportion to our population, the mode of celebrating election-days and other holidays, and the observance of the Sabbath.

But this is not the best we have to say of changes. Less than fifty years ago, the *Edinburgh Review*, vol. xii. p. 158, ridiculed that sermon at Northampton, by William Carey, of which one result was “a subscription to convert 420,000,000 of Pagans ;” now, on the other hand, the American division of Christians devoted to missionary work, which is smaller than the European, annually employs contributions exceeding two and a half millions of dollars, which are given to societies that had no existence fifty years ago, and one fifth of which is given by our then feeble denomination.* In the same period, the small number of missionary laborers, which was at a later day than that hooted at by the enemies of the cross of Christ, as utterly contemptible, and was appalling to its warmest friends, has so increased as now to furnish, for all the inhabitants of our globe, one laborer to about 170,000 souls. Small as this proportion is, we should remember that it is larger than that of the whole twelve apostles to the inhabitants of Rome, at the time of Christ’s ascension to heaven. This advance, in a single half century, exceeds every anticipation, and places all mankind as to hearing the gospel, in a more favorable position than they ever previously held.

This church was established for the maintenance and extension of what its members believe to be the only correct views of the ordinances of the gospel, and the nature of a church of Jesus Christ. So have all Baptist churches. Opposed by the small number of their adherents, who were also generally poor, encountering strong and deep prejudices, and holding sentiments which have commonly and continually brought upon them many reproaches,

* Baptist Almanac, 1854, p. 39.

they have yet maintained those sentiments successfully, and increased in every part of our land. In 1790, the number of Baptist communicants in the United States was about 65,000* ; while the population numbered about four millions. One in sixty, was then the proportion between the two. Last year, 56,758 persons, a number nearly equal to the above, were baptized. This made the aggregate of our church members nearly 800,000, of a population, in 1850, of 21,191,876, which is a little more than one in twenty-seven.† Thus the proportion of communicants of our views to the whole population has, in this interval, more than doubled. But in this neighborhood a more striking increase appears. All the churches within the present limits of the two Boston, the Salem, and the Lowell Associations belonged, in 1805, to the Warren Association. Their members then amounted to 1849. Within these limits, this year, there are 16,499 members of our churches ; and in this city, instead of twenty-four, as fifty years ago, there are now 692 in the two churches.

While the number of communicants of our denomination has thus largely advanced in its proportion to that of our whole population, we have been permitted to witness an equally grateful progress towards the general agreement of candid scholars with our views of the original meaning, and the primitive form, and subjects of baptism. No man of learning would now assert what was commonly held on these points in the churches of our country fifty years ago ; while, among the people, an equal change is manifest in the preference of immersion,

* 64,975, Benedict's Baptists, p. 366, sec. ed.

† Baptist Almanac, 1854.

and the disregard of infant-baptism. It has, for instance, only recently been stated in our journals that, “last year, there were seventy Congregational churches in New Hampshire that reported no infant-baptisms; this year, ninety-six churches, or about one half in the State, report none.”

With this we may present the testimony of Pedobaptist scholars on the subject now adverted to. A number of works referring to it have been published by them within a few years. The names most commonly known among us are Neander, Olshausen, Hagenbach, Bunsen, Conybeare and Howson, and Milman, of foreigners, with Schaff, of our adopted, and Stuart and Coleman, of our native scholars. It is remarkable that they all, as to the fact that the primitive mode of baptism was immersion, express the same sentiment as the late Professor Stuart, who declared, “I know of no one usage of ancient times which seems to be more clearly and certainly made out. I cannot see how it is possible for any candid man who examines the subject to deny this.”* It is thus easy to see with what authority the London Quarterly Review of last June could assert, that “there can be no question that the original form of baptism—the very meaning of the word—was complete immersion in the deep baptismal waters; and that, for at least four centuries, any other form was either unknown, or regarded as an exceptional, almost a monstrous, case.” And some of them, likewise, do, with the North British Review, the quarterly of the Free Church of Scotland, declare, that “Scripture knows nothing of the baptism of infants. There is absolutely not a single trace of it to be found in the New

* Moses Stuart on the Mode of Baptism, p. 75.

Testament ;” * though they may not, with Coleman, fix the date of its rise at A. D. 150, † or with Bunsen, assert that “ Pedobaptism, in the more modern sense, * * * was utterly unknown to the early church, not only down to the end of the second, but indeed to the middle of the third century.” ‡

These learned men do not renounce infant baptism, but generally defend it on other grounds than the explicit authority of the New Testament. In fact, the various grounds on which the service is maintained, and the frequent change from one to another, form an instructive comment on its destitution of all scriptural authority. Beyond question, the original, or sacramentarian, view, which Schaff holds, and which is traceable in the service-book of the church of England, and the creeds of all Lutheran and Calvinistic churches of Europe, is the only view tenable in perfect consistency. This has lately been shown in the utter disagreement of eminent evangelical theologians of Germany, regarding the view of infant-baptism presented at their last “ Kirchentag,” at Frankfort-on-the-Mayn, by one of their number, Doct. Steinmeier, to whom the subject had been assigned for discussion.

We must freely confess that these changes afford pleasure to those who hold our views ; for we believe them to be victories of truth, and therefore for the glory of God, and the welfare of men. We have an humble confidence also, that our maintenance of what we regard as Divine truth, has not been unsuccessful ; and that, to duly measure our influence in the Christian world, for the last

* North British Review, vol. xvii. p. 209.

† Christian Antiquities, p. 529.

‡ Hippolytus, vol. iii. p. 180.

fifty years, we should be able to estimate what would have resulted from our not existing, as well as what has resulted from our existence and labors.

Evidence that our interest in the education of our ministers also keeps pace with our increase of numbers and wealth, is furnished by the contribution, within five or six years, of more than one million and a half of dollars to found and endow colleges and theological schools in the Northern States, by less than half of the entire number of adherents to our views in our country.

These facts enable us to bring before the mind, and hold there, at the same moment, two periods separated by about the time that this church has had an existence. They dispel despondency, by leading us to look over a larger space than the short period of recent recollection; and show us that God is not permitting his cause to languish, notwithstanding the unprecedented growth of our country, the prevalence of sin, and the unfaithfulness of his servants. We have no cause to exult at these facts as a great work that we have done. It is only surprising that God has used us at all, that he has not covered our exertions with disasters, and left another generation to see what we now behold.

Another natural reflection is of a more solemn character. It is only fifty years since this church was formed, and yet how few of the small original company survive. Two names alone remain on our records. But the change is more impressive when we recall the congregation which began to occupy this house not forty-nine years since. Only one of the proprietors of the old house survives as a proprietor of this.* There are only four original owners

* Mr. Pyam Dodge.

of this house still living,* and only as many pews now remaining in the families of their original purchasers ; † while but a single survivor remains in possession of the pew which he purchased at the first sale of pews, and has thenceforward continued to occupy, as he does to-day. ‡ Besides him, only a small company is left of those who began to worship here when this house was first opened for divine service. Pastor, deacons, committee, chorister, and sexton, have all passed away.

To those who are fifty years of age, the period seems but short. As human lives are, however, to be the standard of duration to human beings regarding themselves, it is long ; even a rare length of time. Another fifty years will make similar changes. Here and there one, now in early manhood, will then be found to recall the service of to-day, and furnish some reminiscence of the occasion. More, who are at present the children of our families, will repeat such things as are now impressing themselves on their memories. Let me counsel all the parents now present to speak some word, or give some memento to their children, fit for the present occasion, and that will fitly recall it, and its lessons about time and eternity, the world and the soul, when the half century we enter on to-day shall have been finished. But how many of us will then be dead, and have begun our experience of endless doom ! Not only most of the parents who are now young, but many of their children, and their grandchildren too, will have passed away.

* Messrs. Pyam Dodge, David Putnam, James Perkins, and William Price.

† They are the families of Eb'r Seccomb, George West, Wm. Price, and Benj. Blanchard.

‡ Mr. William Price.

May the God of salvation make this house “the gate of heaven” to them ; while here the way is shown, and the gate is opened, through which, by Jesus Christ, we may enter into life.

We need to have fear for ourselves as well as our brethren, regarding the results of increased numbers and wealth. Our views of God’s truth and his service are not unimportant. They do not rest on prejudice, or tradition, or preference. They had their origin in the relinquishment of all these, to return to the simple Word of God ; and they can be retained by us, and extended to others, by means of thorough conviction alone. They are still opposed and rejected. But if wrong, they are so grievously wrong, they so directly oppose a fundamental truth in Christianity, that they should not be met or borne with by any false charity. And if right, kindness to those whom we regard as erring brethren in Christ must not induce us to abate a particle of the distinctness and constancy with which we assert “the truth as it is in Jesus.” Our views are essential to the complete separation of the state from the church, true liberty in religious matters, the preservation of the church, as designed by its Saviour to be exclusively a body of renewed souls, and the absolute and sole responsibility of each person for his religious state as a hearer of the gospel. We may be called hyper-spiritualistic, as by Bunsen and Schaff, as if vainly striving for an impracticable church ; but we can find no other model in the Word of the Head of the church, and we have found nothing either in the history of our own views to make us distrust their correctness, or suspect their mischievous influence ; while neither have we found any thing in the history of the church, or in the practical influence of

other views, to attract us to those which are opposite to our own.

We must, however, pray for grace to cling to the same doctrines, have the same spirit, and rely on the same use of the same means as have heretofore been blessed among us by God to honor his name, and turn men from sin to his service. Brotherly love, personal efforts to save souls, the desire and expectation of revivals of religion, liberal contributions of property to Christ's service, and firm and fervent attachment to the doctrines of the gospel, have ever been plain characteristics of this church. Their presence has produced fruit here over which we rejoice, which makes the memory of our fathers grateful, and which has hence sent out an influence to bless the world, which it is not in our power to describe, or even fully to estimate. But the day is coming when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed, and what is now untraceable shall be made known. May we then, brethren and friends, all stand with the fathers who are "dead in Christ," at the right hand of the Judge; and our lives and labors be found to have contributed, from true love to Christ, no trifling influence for the good of this community, and for the welfare of the world.

NOTES.

NOTE A. PAGE 11.

Unitarian sentiments, it is true, were not yet professed even by those who afterwards claimed for themselves, or had others claim for them, that they held them at this time. Even as late as 1812, the late Francis Parkman, D. D., then in London, wrote a letter to a publication of that city, in which he denied that more than one minister of Boston could fairly be called a Unitarian, from any sentiments which he had avowed, and that, "except at most four or five heads of families, there was scarcely a parishioner in Boston who would not be shocked at having his minister preach the peculiarities of Unitarianism." He concludes his letter by saying, "I only wished to show, as I trust I have done, without offence, that in Boston, in New England, and in America at large, we are not, and permit me to add, as long as we study the Scriptures, I believe we shall not become converts to your 'new doctrine.'" *Spirit of Pilgrims*, vol. ii. p. 223. A few years before, in 1809, Rev. Mr. Buckminster, of Brattle St. Church, Boston, wrote in this way to Mr. Belsham, at that time an eminent English Unitarian divine and author: "Do you wish to know any thing of American theology? I can only tell you that except in the small town of Boston, and its vicinity, there cannot be collected, from a space of one hundred miles, six clergymen who have any conception of rational theology, and who would not shrink from the suspicion of Anti-trinitarianism in any shape." *Christian Examiner*, vol. xlvii. p. 199.

At these times, says one, "the charge of Unitarianism was either repelled as unjustifiable, or borne with more of the aspect of patience, than with that of exulting illumination." Pages from the *Ecclesiastical History of New England*, p. 66. And later, a Unitarian witness states that, "in our religious world there was nothing but distrust on the one side, and fear and evasion on the other; the self-conceited theologian looked awry on the suspected heretic, and the object of his suspicion answered him with circumlocution and hesitation." Greenwood, quoted in *Pages, &c.* p. 68. See also *Christian Examiner*, for March and April, 1826. *Spirit of Pilgrims*, vol. i. p. 326; vol. iii. p. 123. In 1815, there ceased to be any room for the concealment, or any grounds for suspecting the concealment, of Unitarian views by those who held them.

NOTE B. PAGE 23.

The claim, that others deserve the honor which we demand for Roger Williams, is frequently made; but it is not justified by history. The first conception of religious freedom is not attributed to him by us; nor that he first tolerated under his government other religious views than his own. But this is our claim: he was the first Christian ruler who ever framed a government for the purpose of allowing all religious views to be professed with equal freedom under its protection; who denied the duty or right of civil government to maintain a religion of the State, as a part of its functions; and consequently, also denied its right to extend mere toleration to the profession and practice of religious views which did not infringe on the civil rights of others. The words "religious liberty," "freedom of conscience," etc., must not impose upon us.

Neither did Henry Jacob plead for true religious freedom, nor was it enjoyed in Holland, or Maryland, when Williams founded Providence. Mr. Hanbury, a late and able claimant of such honor for Mr. Jacob, yet inconsistently admits, "that Mr. Jacob did not on his side dissent upon, or argue for, religious liberty, in the entire breadth of it." He petitioned, in the paper on which the claim on his behalf rests, for toleration, from which yet Papists were expressly excluded by him; while, at the same time, in another work, he admits the right and duty of the magistrate to oversee the teaching of churches and ministers.* Who chooses, may compare such views with those held by Williams.

Great ignorance prevails regarding the religious freedom which was enjoyed in Holland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This is partly owing to the frequent occurrence of the words "freedom of conscience" and "religious freedom," in the histories of the Netherlands at this period.

It must be remembered that the revolt of the Netherlands from the authority of Phillip II. had, in the northern provinces, lasted over thirty years, when, in 1609, the independence of those provinces, which constituted the republic of Holland, was acknowledged by Spain. The southern provinces, which in a short time submitted to the Spanish authority, were almost entirely Papal; and in the northern, Catholics were numerous, while the Protestants were not only partly Lutheran, and partly Reformed, but had many minor sects among them. The treaty of Ghent, 1576, was formed between the Protestants and Romanists early in the revolt; and in forming it, each, of necessity, conceded religious liberty to the other. The necessities of their common cause made both parties tolerant during the conflict. And after the submission of the southern provinces to Spain, necessity still prevented unanimity, and forbade intolerance. In 1588, a deputation from the States of Holland to Queen Elizabeth informed her that, even then, "the greater

* Underhill's Historical Survey, etc., pp. 202, 207.

part of those States were Papists ;” and they therefore feared the conclusion of a treaty of peace with Philip, in which “liberty of conscience” should be assured to them, unless every thing regarding it were defined and fixed. Otherwise, they said, they should have “such a liberty as is no better than the greatest slavery; and to speak properly, such as would only be the greatest torment that can be inflicted on conscience.” “The true end of the deputation,” sent to Queen Elizabeth, as the deputies explained it, “consisted herein: that the free exercise of the only true religion might be preserved entire, without suffering the Popish or any other to be re-established.” *

The magistrates regarded it as their duty to supervise the religion of their respective States, to elect and dismiss ministers, banish heretics, (as Koornhert from Utrecht, in 1589, and Vogelsang with two others from Amsterdam, in 1598.) suppress meetings of Romanists and Anabaptists, and still claim that religious liberty was enjoyed.† Besides, attempts were made to establish a uniform Protestantism. For instance, in 1588‡, it was decreed “that the Evangelical Reformed religion should be maintained and exercised throughout the Provinces, and that no other should be permitted,” ‡ i. e., have recognition by law. This decree was renewed in 1584. And Brandt informs us that, in 1599, even the Brownists, as the English Independents were called, held their meetings merely “by the connivance of the magistrates.” §

Those who claim that religious liberty was enjoyed in Holland, seem to completely forget the results to the Remonstrants of the Synod of Dort, assembled only a year and a half before the Pilgrims sailed from Holland. || They were terribly severe. “Were it not indeed,” says Davies, “for the change of names, we might imagine ourselves to have turned some pages back, and to be reading again the penal edicts of the emperors Charles and Philip III.” Grotius, one of the leaders of the Remonstrants, escaping prison by a device of his wife, fled, and remained in banishment till death. But he probably thus avoided the fate of Olden Barneveldt, who was beheaded for espousing the same side. Although they were subjected to so much suffering, this party could not fairly find fault; for, in 1612, at Rotterdam, they had used “against their opponents the coercive force of the civil power, of which they afterwards so bitterly complained, when turned against themselves.” ¶

* Brandt’s History of the Reformation in the Low Countries, vol. i. pp. 426, 427.

† See Evidence on these points in Brandt, vol. i. pp. 430. 453. 461. 463. 473. 475. 477.

‡ History of Holland, by C. M. Davies, London, 1851, vol. ii. p. 141. Modern Universal History, vol. xxxi. pp. 13. 97.

§ Brandt. Vol. i. p. 481.

|| Articles of Synod of Dort, etc., by Rev. Thomas Scott, pp. 138–143.

¶ Davies, History of Holland, vol. ii. pp. 465. 527. See also Hallam’s Literature of Europe, vol. ii. p. 48, note; and for Grotius’ advocacy of the interference of magistrates with the religion of their subjects, see the same page, and the preceding one, of Hallam.

After the death of Maurice, the penalties against the Remonstrants were gradually dispensed with; yet, in 1631, in order to pacify the clergy, "the States of Holland, with the consent of Frederic Henry, voted the republication of the decree prohibiting the Remonstrants, under severe penalties, from holding separate conventicles." And in 1651, not to trace this matter further, in "the Great Assembly" of the States, there were debates on the subject of religion, which came to this result: "That each Province should support the views of the Synod of Dort. Those sects which were tolerated should be kept in quiet and good order, and not permitted in any other places than those where they were established already; that the decrees against the Papists should remain in force, and the foreign ambassadors enjoined not to permit any service in their chapels to be performed in the Dutch language."*

Further evidence on the nature of religious liberty enjoyed in Holland, is furnished by a contemporaneous witness in an exposition of his own views. It is the renowned John Robinson to whom we refer. In his "Apology for the Brownists," published first in 1619, in the chapter on civil magistracy, he says, "We believe the very same touching the civil magistrate with the Belgic Reformed churches, and willingly subscribe to their Confession." Of magistrates, that Confession asserts, that "it is their duty, not only to be careful to preserve the civil government, but also to endeavor that the ministry may be preserved, that all idolatry and counterfeit worship of God may be clean abolished, that the kingdom of Antichrist may be overthrown, and that the kingdom of Christ may be enlarged." †

We often find Sir William Temple referred to as assuring us that religious liberty was enjoyed in Holland in the seventeenth century. He was one of the most eminent statesmen of the reign of Charles II., and in fact controlled the foreign politics of that reign. Having resided at the Hague as ambassador of Charles some time, he was recalled in 1669, and after that wrote his "Observations on the United Provinces." He praises very greatly the religious freedom enjoyed there, and gives us this information in reference to its true nature. His general testimony is, that all men enjoyed such freedom in Holland, "either by allowance or connivance." He has explained this general statement by what follows. The "Roman Catholic religion was alone excepted from the common protection of their laws, it making men, as the States believed, worse subjects than the rest." "Of all other religions, every man enjoys the free exercise in his own chamber, or in his own house, unquestioned and unespied. And if the followers of any sect grow so numerous in any place that they affect a public congregation, and are content to purchase a place of assembly, to bear the charge of a pastor or teacher, and to pay for this liberty to the public, they go and propose their desire to the magistrates of the place where they reside, who

* Davies, vol. ii. pp. 582. 702.

† Underhill, Historical Survey, etc., p. 213.

inform themselves of their opinions and manner of worship, and if they find nothing in either destructive to civil society, or prejudicial to the Constitutions of their State, and content themselves with the price that is offered for the purchase of this liberty, they easily allow it: but with the condition, that one or more commissioners shall be appointed, who shall have free admission to their meetings, shall be both the observers and witnesses of all that is acted or preached among them, and whose testimony shall be received concerning any thing that passes there to the prejudice of the State.*

We thus find abundant evidence that the government of Holland permitted nothing beyond mere toleration, at the time when true religious liberty was enjoyed in Providence and Rhode Island.

To the same conclusion we must come in respect to Maryland. The Charter of Maryland may be found in Hazard's State Papers, vol. i. p. 327; and the general testimony respecting it is, as Hildreth's, that "there is no guarantee, nor indeed the least hint, of any toleration in religion, not authorized by the law of England." An act passed in 1649 on the subject of religion, "has furnished to many writers, even of modern date, very plausible grounds for eulogium on the first Roman Catholic settlers of Virginia." *Ina* This is the first act now known to have been passed on the subject in that colony, as its government was not really settled before this, although fifteen years had elapsed since the first colonists arrived. Bozman, in his History of Maryland, describes it correctly in saying that "it goes far in contending for the constitutional power in the legislature to enact bylaws made for the purpose, an established religion of the State." Hildreth also remarks, that "it is evident, that policy had a much greater share in the enactment of this act, than any enlightened view of the rights of opinion, of which indeed, it evinces but a very limited and confused idea."†

A curious and rare volume containing this Act, Babylon's Fall in Maryland, a just and clear Refutation of Babylon's Fall, with the Oath of Fidelity to Lord Baltimore, required of every proprietor of land, and the addition to it, demanded of magistrates, can be seen in a volume in the Boston Athenæum, with the title "Virginia—Maryland, 1609—1655." It is very evident that all Lord Baltimore and the Catholics aimed at was the sure enjoyment of liberty by Roman Catholics, with such toleration of Protestants as might be necessary for this purpose.

NOTE C. PAGE 26.

We still meet with attempts to defend the treatment which Roger Williams experienced from the government of Massachusetts. He has been called a "turbulent and innovating spirit;" but certainly he appears quite differ-

* Works of Sir William Temple, vol. i. pp. 58, 59. London, 1740.

† Hildreth, History of United States, vol. 1. pp. 208, 347, 348. Bozman, History of Maryland, vol. ii. pp. 359, 351.

ent in his "Bloody Tenent of Persecution," which was addressed to Rev. John Cotton, who had been the great cause of his banishment. In this, Williams claimed that "none of his views tended to the breach of holy or civil peace;" "of which," he says, "I have ever desired to be unfeignedly tender, acknowledging the ordinance of magistracy to be properly and adequately fitted by God to preserve the civil state in civil peace and order." Mr. Cotton was troubled to justify, or even to give the cause of, Williams' banishment. He says, "Although I dare not deny the sentence passed to be righteous in the eyes of God," since it had separated you from them, who had separated them from the ordinances, "yet it may be they passed that sentence against you, not upon that ground; but for aught I know, for your other corrupt doctrines, which tend to the disturbance both of civil and holy peace." To this Williams replies, "It is no wonder that so many, having been demanded the cause of my sufferings, have answered, that they could not tell for what, since Mr. Cotton himself knows not distinctly what cause to assign." "Oh! where was the waking care of so excellent and worthy a man, to see his brother and beloved in Christ so afflicted, he knows not distinctly for what!"

It is well known that Cotton and Winthrop do not agree in the accounts they give of the causes of Williams' banishment, and the memory of the former can hardly be cleared of a large part of the responsibility of that act. Williams was informed by some "worthy gentlemen, with tears," "that they could not in their souls have been brought to have consented to the sentence, had not Mr. Cotton in private given them advice and counsel, proving it just and warrantable to their consciences." Afterwards, Mr. Cotton seems to have regretted the course he had taken, for Williams says, he "professed both in speech and writing that he was no procurer of my sorrows;" and quotes him as declaring, that "what was done by the magistrates in that kind (his civil banishment), was neither done by my counsel nor consent." *

Yet the man who was thus ill-treated, and who thus bore that ill-treatment, which its authors lived to regret, has been opprobriously and derisively called a "Come-Outer;" and his banishment has found vindicators in our own day, in the face of the confession of its extreme severity, if not wrong, made even by its authors. Far better were it for them to imitate the Rev. Dr. Baird, who, in his "Religion in America," after referring to their justification of themselves as "the best they could make," exclaims—"Miserable excuse!" and then confess the superiority of the banished one to his persecutors, both in his principles and in his temper.

* "Bloody Tenent of Persecution," etc., pp. 367, 377, 378, 379, 383. London, 1848.





